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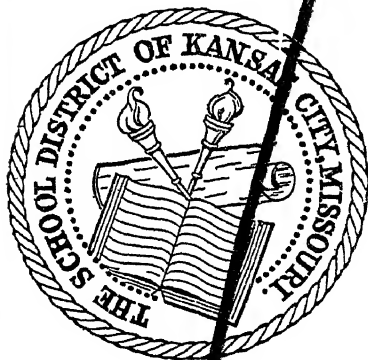


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# POLITICAL AMERICANISMS

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# POLITICAL AMERICANISMS

A GLOSSARY  
OF  
TERMS AND PHRASES CURRENT AT DIFFERENT PERIODS  
IN  
AMERICAN POLITICS

BY  
CHARLES LEDYARD NORTON

NEW YORK AND LONDON  
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## PREFACE.

IT is impossible to look over the columns of a daily journal, especially during the progress of a spirited political campaign, without encountering numerous expressions and phrases, the meaning of which cannot be learned from any dictionary, but which, to one who is familiar with the current *argot* of the period, are often quite as vigorously expressive as the most picturesque slang of the streets. The vocabulary of the American politician has indeed become copious beyond what is generally believed, and the glossary presented herewith lays no claim to exhaustiveness. It includes, however, a number of phrases which can be found in no other compilation. Some of these have passed out of current use, others are defined according to the best authorities available

—often that of gray-haired veterans who may have cast their first votes for Jackson or Clay, and who were in the prime of life during the “Hard Cider” campaign. Others, again, are of very recent origin.

It has not always been easy to decide upon the exact meaning of a particular phrase ; indeed, meanings frequently vary with localities. Doubtless careful readers will note sundry infelicities of definition, which in point of fact may be due mainly to local variations.

Wherever these definitions touch upon present issues, they must almost of necessity prove unsatisfactory in one way or another. Republicans, for instance, may naturally think that a definition of the Mulligan letters is out of place in such a glossary, while Democrats may hold that a mere definition is ridiculously inadequate.

Democrats, on the other hand, may regard as uncalled for any explanation of the “Cipher Despatches” with which their candidate for the presidency was so intimately connected a few years ago, while Republicans will consider the paragraph culpably lenient.

These incidents recall the fact that while the writer was questioning a highly intelligent elderly gentleman of this city on the subject of certain phrases current half a century ago, the "Mulligan letters" chanced to be mentioned.

"What are those letters," said the old gentleman, "and who was Mulligan?"

The writer opened his note-book and read the brief explanation.

"Well," was the comment, "of course I have seen no end of stuff about it all, but I never took the trouble to read it."

He really seemed glad to learn, without spending too much time, just who Mulligan was.

If this be true of an incident so much be-written as this was in its day, how much less likely are people to know the meaning of such terms as "Morganize," "hunker," "locofoco," and a hundred others, all possessing certain points of interest that may often be traced back to curious derivations!

A first instalment of these terms and phrases

was published in the *Magazine of American History* in 1884 and attracted favorable comment on both sides of the Atlantic. The author has had the pleasure of seeing it reproduced, almost *verbatim*, either with or without credit, in other more pretentious works professing to cover the wide field of English and American slang.

The compilation has been considerably enlarged in the present edition, and while the author is well aware of its incompleteness, he hopes that he has at least made a creditable beginning in a special field not heretofore explored.

[Blank pages for memoranda will be found at the end of the volume, and any suggestions touching American political terms, new or old, will be thankfully received ]

C. L. N.

NEW YORK, *November*, 1890.

## POLITICAL AMERICANISMS.

**Abolition, Abolitionist, etc.**—During the controversy that preceded the emancipation of slaves in the British colonies (1773-1833) the phrase *to abolish slavery* was so frequently used that with its allied nouns it acquired a specific meaning: *Abolition*, the movement in favor of putting an end to slavery; *Abolitionist*, one who sympathized with this movement. With these meanings the words were transplanted to America, but during the anti-slavery agitation in the United States widely divergent shades of significance were acquired. In the North an Abolitionist was one who favored the abolition of slavery. In the South the term was, until after the Civil War, a synonym for all that is contemptible and dishonest; this in addition to the true derivative signification as understood at the

North. Many an affray has arisen from this divergence of meanings and the consequent misunderstandings. The history of abolition is co-extensive with that of the United States, the anti-slavery agitation having begun before the war for independence, while Vermont abolished slavery within her borders in 1777. (See "Abolition.")

Such terms as "abolitionize," "abolitiondom," etc., are a low order of newspaper English, and have never been seriously used in other than third-rate publications or as acknowledged slang.

**Absenteeism.** — Adapted into American speech from the Irish "National" vocabulary, and generally used in the United States with reference to wealthy citizens who reside abroad.

**Adamites.** — Adherents of John Quincy Adams, tenth President of the United States, current 1821-1832. (See "Jacksonites.")

**Addition, Division, and Silence** — The supposed qualifications necessary for a lobbyist or an unscrupulous political worker. The phrase is believed to have first appeared in print in the *New York Sun*, March 15, 1872. It occurred in

a letter alleged to have been written by W. H. Kemble, then State Treasurer of Pennsylvania, to T. J. Coffey, of Washington, introducing G. O. Evans. "He understands addition, division, and silence," was the exact phrase, which, while no doubt capable of an innocent interpretation, was widely circulated under the brand of alleged corrupt intent. A libel suit was brought by Mr. Kemble. The plaintiff asked for six cents damages, but the jury failed to agree on a verdict.

**Agricultural Wheel.**—A political society of farmers and planters, organized by three farmers near Des Arc, Prairie Co., Ark., in 1882. Local branches, called "county wheels," "town wheels," etc., were established in the vicinity, and at this writing, 1890, the association has become so strong as to be a powerful political factor in the Western and Southwestern States. Its purpose is to secure proper legislation and representation for the agricultural classes. (See "Grangers.")

**Albany Regency.**—So called from the residence of its members at the State capital



of New York. It was an association of Democratic politicians organized in 1820, and including in its early membership Martin Van Buren, Silas Wright, John A. Dix, Dean Richmond, Peter Caggar, and many others. It absolutely, though unofficially, controlled the action of the party until 1854, when, its opponents having learned its methods, its power was broken.

**Aliunde Joe.**—A nickname of the Hon. Joseph P. Bradley, Justice of the United States Supreme Court, acquired during his service as a member of the Electoral Commission (*q. v.*) in 1877. A singular combination of fortuitous circumstance and political knavery threw the responsibility of the casting vote in a matter of grave national importance upon Justice Bradley, and it was decided that "the commission was not competent to consider evidence *aliunde* (from elsewhere than) the certificates." The frequent use of the word at the time associated it permanently with Justice Bradley's name.

**American Knights.**—Golden Circle, Knights of the (*q. v.*).

**American Party.**—This society originated

in New York in 1835, disappeared, and was revived in 1843, its avowed object being to oppose the usurpation of the city government by foreigners. Owing to the extreme views of its leaders it fell into disfavor, but came to the front again in 1853, under the popular designation of "Know-nothings" (*q. v.*).

**Amnesty Oath.**—After the Civil War (1861-65) "amnesty" was granted to such rebels as would take a prescribed oath. Derisively called the "Damnasty Oath" by many who were required to take it

**Anties, or Antys.**—A faction of Democrats who in 1849-50 voted with the Whigs.

**Anti-Federalists.**—See "Democrats."

**Anti-Masonry.\***—A movement precipitated by the alleged murder of Morgan (*q. v.*) by the Free Masons in 1826. William H. Seward, Millard Fillmore, and Thurlow Weed were among the leaders of the Anti-Masons, and

\* The prefix *anti* or *ant* is used in so many combinations whose meaning is self-evident (as anti southern, anti-negro, etc.) that only some of the more important are here defined.

the party wielded political power for several years.

**Anti-Monopolist.**—One who is opposed to the existence of monopolies in the commercial world, on the ground that their political influence endangers the liberty of the people. Legislators are often classified as monopolists and anti-monopolists.

**Anti-Nebraska Men.**—A party formed in 1854, mainly from disaffected Whigs who were opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska bill (*q. v.*).

**Anti-Renters.**—The anti-rent movement bore a conspicuous part in the politics of New York during most of the decade prior to 1847. It resulted from the attempt of the heirs of Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer to collect rents. Laws had been passed abolishing feudal tenures in 1779 and 1785; but the tenants of Van Rensselaer—who by courtesy was styled the “Patroon” (a title never claimed) to the end of his long and useful life—still continued to enjoy the farms upon which they lived on leases for life tenures, or from year to year. Through the indulgence of the “Patroon” these tenants were

all in debt. When he died they resisted the steps taken in the settlement of his estate to collect rents, and complained that these semi-feudal land tenures were totally inconsistent with the spirit and genius of republican institutions. When the matter was pressed, they armed and disguised themselves as Indians, and offered such resistance to the civil officers that military interference became necessary. The governor sent troops to quell the riotous proceedings, and the disturbances attracted national attention. The newspapers were full of the subject ; it was carried into politics, and then into the courts. In the end, the State constitution of New York, in 1846, abolished all feudal tenures. The leases were converted into freeholds—that is, the parties who had rented bought their farms, giving mortgages, and thus became freeholders instead of tenants.

**Anti-Slavery.**—Opposed to the continuance and extension of negro slavery, but not necessarily an Abolitionist (*q. v.*).

**Ashlanders.**—A notorious political club identified with Ashland Square in Baltimore,

which city has been exceptionally prolific in names of this character, as "Plug-Uglies," "Dead-Rabbits," etc.

**Ash Pole.**—The white ash tree was selected in 1828 as symbolic of the Whig party, from "Ashland," Henry Clay's plantation near Lexington, Ky. For many years no Whig flag-raising was considered orthodox unless the staff was of ash. The Democratic symbol was hickory (*q. v.*).

**Back-pay Bill.**—Otherwise known as the “Back-salary Grab,” the “Back-pay Steal,” etc. (See “Salary Grab.”)

**Badger State** = Wisconsin.

**Bald Eagle.**—A nickname that has been popularly applied to numerous political leaders and orators who chance to be bald ; as, the Bald Eagle of Westchester County (Gen. James M. Husted). The nickname, of course, largely owes its popularity to the fact that the national emblem is the white-headed or “bald” eagle.

**Ball.**—“The ball is rolling on”—a line from a popular song of the Harrison campaign (1836).

**Ballot-box Stuffing.**—Originally practised in New York, where boxes were constructed with false bottoms, so that an unlimited number of spurious ballots could be introduced by the party having control of the polling place. By mutual consent of parties this is now practically impossible.

**Bandanna.**—A red bandanna pocket handkerchief was adopted as its badge by the Democratic party in the presidential campaign of 1888, in compliment to Allan G. Thurman, candidate for Vice-President, who was popularly believed to prefer this kind of handkerchief.

**Banner State, etc.**—The State, county, town, or other political subdivision that gives the largest vote for a party candidate is termed the "banner state," "county," etc.—is entitled, that is, to all party honors.

**Barbecue** (Spanish *barbacoa*).—To cook a large animal whole, over an open fire. A French derivation suggests that the goat, from beard to tail—*de barbe-à-queue*—was the first victim of this species of cookery, and this derivation is commonly accepted. The word, however, is undoubtedly of American origin, *barbacoa* giving it as nearly as the early Spanish explorers could adapt it from the aboriginal dialects. The barbecue was formerly a conspicuous feature of political meetings, and is still common at the South and West (see "Burgoo"). During the presidential campaign of 1884 it reappeared in

New York State, a genuine barbecue having been held in Brooklyn.

**Bar'l** (Barrel).—A wealthy candidate for office is said to have remarked: "Let the boys know that there's a bar'l o' money ready for 'em," or words to that effect. The use of the term in this sense became general about 1876.

**Barnburner**.—Mr. Thurlow Weed ascribes the origin of this to the "Dorr Rebellion" of 1842, the participants in which insurrection were denounced as "rioters," "barnburners," etc., they having, as was alleged, been guilty of arson. In 1848, when the Democrats of New York State split in regard to the State canal policy, the name was recalled and applied to the radical wing of the party, their opponents being called "Hunkers" (*q. v.*). This was the more appropriate, as many politicians and journals which had espoused the not altogether unjust cause of Dorr now joined the radical faction. In 1848 the more progressive of the Barnburners were instrumental in forming the Free Soil party (*q. v.*). Additional aptness accrues from the legend of the Dutchman (Democrats were



nicknamed Dutchmen at this time) who set his barn afire in order to kill the rats which infested it, the analogy being that the Democrats in question would fain destroy all existing institutions in order to correct their abuses.

**Bachelor President, The.**—James Buchanan, fifteenth president of the United States.

**Bay State** = Massachusetts.—So called from Cape Cod Bay, which includes a great part of the coast.

**Bear State** = Arkansas.

**Benton's Mint Drops.**—Gold coins of the United States, especially the smaller denominations. So called because Thomas H. Benton was the leading advocate in Congress of a bi-metallic currency, and it was largely through his influence that gold became more common as a circulating medium (1833).

**Black Code.**—The "*Code Noir*" of Louisiana was prepared by Bienville, governor of that province under the French *régime*, about 1723. It was perpetuated under Spanish rule, and to a considerable extent after Louisiana became one of the United States. The term has been some-

what loosely applied to all laws touching the government of the negroes.

**Black Dan.**—A nickname of Daniel Webster, current during his public career (1820-1852).

**Black Jack.**—An army nickname of Gen. John A. Logan, given him because of his very dark complexion. It gained political currency during the presidential campaign of 1884, when General Logan was Republican candidate for the Vice-Presidency. He was also called Black Eagle.

**Black Republican.** — A contemptuous Southern nickname for Republicans, owing to their friendliness toward the cause of negro emancipation.

**Bleeding Kansas.** — During the border troubles resulting from the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill (1854) there was fighting of a more or less organized description, and many were killed on both sides. "Bleeding Kansas" became a popular phrase with the Northern orators of the day, and was used scoffingly by those on the other side. It is believed to have

been originally coined to serve as a newspaper head-line.

**Blizzard.**—A political party is said to have been struck by a *blizzard* when it has suffered overwhelming and unexpected defeat at the polls. The etymology of the word is doubtful, but it is said to have been long in use in Midland England and among the Pennsylvania Dutch. Its specific American meaning is a violent and destructive snow-storm peculiar to the Northwest.

**Blocks of Five.**—Near the end of the presidential campaign of 1888 a letter was published by Democratic authority, alleged to have been written by Col. W. W. Dudley, Treasurer of the Republican National Committee, to the Chairman of the Indiana State Committee. It contained a recommendation to secure "floaters in blocks of five," which was construed to mean the purchase of votes at wholesale rates. The Democratic managers took pains to circulate the letter as widely as possible prior to the election. Proceedings for libel were at once instituted, but were never brought to trial. It is curious,

as pointed out by M. H. Morgan in the *Nation*, November 21, 1889, that the practice of bribing in "blocks" is of very ancient origin. Suidas, under the word *δεκαζεσθαι*, says: "This phrase originated from the practice of bribing men by tens. Candidates for office or persons with a job to carry through used to deal out their bribes to blocks of ten."

**Blood-tubs.**—A semi-political association of rough characters in Baltimore (about 1854), consisting mainly of butchers, who are said to have been in the habit of ducking political opponents in the slaughter-house tubs.

**Bloody Chasm.**—"To bridge the bloody chasm" was a favorite expression with orators who, during the years immediately succeeding the Civil War, sought to obliterate the memory of the struggle.

**Bloody Shirt.**—The introduction of this phrase into American politics is credited to Oliver Perry Morton, Governor of Indiana, 1861-67, and United States Senator from Indiana during the reconstruction period, and always advocated a stern policy in dealing with

the then recent rebellion. The blood-stained shirt, formerly used as battle flag in Corsican *vendetta*, no doubt suggested the American usage. To "wave the bloody shirt" is to harrow up memories of the Civil War. The phrase has been burlesqued as "the ensanguined undergarment," etc.

**Blue Hen State**=Delaware; said to have originated in the nickname of a Delaware corps in the war for independence, whose commander was a veteran cock-fighter, and always laid his bets on "The blue hen's chickens," his favorite breed of fighters. This became the nickname of his corps, and subsequently of the State.

**Blue Jeans Williams.**—James Douglass Williams, Governor of Indiana (1876-80). He wore clothing made of blue jeans—the material commonly worn by farmers—in order, it was said, to conciliate the rural vote.

**Blue Laws.**—A rigorous code of moral laws—purely mythical, it is believed—said to have been enacted in Connecticut during the early days of Puritanism.

**Blue Noses.**—A nickname for Canadians,

especially Nova Scotians; probably from the supposed blueness of their noses, owing to the cold climate.

**Bobolition, Bobolitionist, etc.**—A corruption of "abolition," doubtless originating with illiterate negroes, who are especially ingenious in distorting unfamiliar words. Mr. E. J. Stearns, of Easton, Md., gives from memory, verified by fixed dates, an instance of a political broad-sheet containing a burlesque account of a "Bobolition Celebration" in Boston, July 14, 1824 (*Magazine of American History*).

**Bolt.**—Used as a verb to indicate the right of the independently minded to revolt against partisan rule, as, "He bolted the party nominations." Also as a noun: "He has organized a bolt." The word derived this meaning from its sporting application to a runaway horse.

**Boodle.**—Lexicographers have suggested the Dutch *boedel*—estate, possession—as the original form. Markham (1625) uses "*buddle*" as equivalent to mass or crowd. Macaulay (1828), in "Political Georgics," writes: "And *boodle's* patriot band," evidently meaning bribery, plunder,

and the like. "The whole kit and *boodle*," meaning the whole company and its equipment, the horses, carriage, and all its belongings, etc., was certainly in use colloquially in New England about 1840; as was also "caboodle," much in the same sense. It occurs in "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" (O. W. Holmes, 1858), and, according to the *Cincinnati Commercial*, was current in the West about 1870, with a meaning not far wide of its present significance in American politics. There is much evidence tending to show that it was thieves' *argot*, and in use among the criminal classes long before it found its way into contemporary print; meaning, in general, the *bulk of the booty*. It owed its sudden prominence to a corrupt board of aldermen in the city of New York, to whom the term was applied, and many of whom were convicted of accepting bribes, or "boodle," in return for their votes. In its political sense it means the money provided for campaign expenses, usually with the implied intimation that it is for corrupt purposes.

**Boom.**—Variously used as a noun or a verb.

Probably derived, as suggested by Mr. Brander Matthews, from a logger's term, describing a flooded stream bearing logs down toward tide-water; as, "The river is booming." The same term is used among seamen in allusion to a vessel sailing free, or "boomed out." Within a few years it has made its appearance in a variety of combinations; as, "The whole State is booming for Smith;" or, "The boys have whooped up the State to boom for Smith;" or, "The Smith boom is ahead in this State," etc., etc.

**Border-Ruffians.**—This came prominently into use during the Kansas-Nebraska troubles of 1854-55, and was originally applied to bands of voters who crossed the border from the slave States in order to carry the elections in the Territories.

**Boss.**—The political "boss" is the leader whose word is law to his henchmen. "Boss" Tweed of New York is believed to have been the first to wear the title in a semi-official way. The phrase "Boss Rule" is said to have been invented by Mr. Wayne MacVeagh, and employed by him in political speeches in Chicago.



It is now in common use in this sense. Originally the word is Dutch (*baas*), and its American usage dates from the early Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam. It is still popularly used in a semi-respectful way in the vicinity of New York, but in its political application always carries with it an implication of corrupt or discreditable methods.

**Boston Tea Party, The.**—As a protest against taxation of imports by the Crown, a party of Bostonians, on the night of 16th December, 1773, seized three English tea-ships that had just arrived, and threw their cargoes into the harbor. This was the first overt act that preceded the war for independence, and was punished by Parliament by the passage of the Boston Port bill, which precipitated the outbreak of hostilities.

**Bourbon.**—A Democrat of the straitest sect, a "fire-eater" (*q. v.*). Applied for the most part to Southern Democrats of the old school. This use of the word probably antedates the Civil War, but no instance of such use has been found in print. Bourbon County, Ky., is popu-

larly associated with this kind of Democrat, but we must look to the old Bourbon party in France—uncompromising adherents of political tradition—for its true paternity. “They learned nothing and forgot nothing.” The *Nation* (New York) defines the term as properly applicable to any one who adheres to tradition of any kind.

**Boycott.**—An adaptation from the Irish Nationalists. Captain Boycott was an Irish landlord who incurred the wrath of the neighboring peasantry in 1880, and was popularly ostracized. No one would have anything to do with him, or allow any one else to deal with him. Hence, primarily, the meaning of the verb “to boycott” is to ostracize. It has been adopted in America with the same general meaning.

**Boys.**—This word is often used nowadays to designate the political hangers-on of a candidate or party; those who can be counted upon to cheer and be on hand in season and out of season, and who expect the small change of the campaign funds in the way of free drinks and the minor offices as their remuneration. “Heelers” (*q. v.*) has much the same meaning, but

with a rather derogatory implication. It is safe to call a boy a "boy," but to call him a "heeler" might involve an unpleasantness. "B'hoy" is a somewhat obsolete corruption of *boy*, and has a rowdyish rather than a political signification.

**Brigadiers or Confederate Brigadiers.**

—As soon as the lately seceded States were re-admitted to the Union, it became apparent that a large proportion of their newly elected representatives in Congress had been generals in the Confederate service. They were often designated collectively as "the Brigadiers."

**Brother Jonathan.**—A general nickname for Americans. It was originally applied by Washington to Gov. Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut, his secretary and aide, on whose judgment Washington placed great reliance. In perplexity he was accustomed to say, "We must consult Brother Jonathan."

**Buckeye State, The** = Ohio, where the horse-chestnut tree grows abundantly and is commonly called the "buckeye."

**Bucktails.**—A political faction originating in New York in 1815, which was opposed to the

administration of Gov. De Witt Clinton. The members wore bucktails in their hats and belonged to the benevolent association known as the Tammany Society (*q. v.*).

**Bull-doze.**—In Texas and western Louisiana the “bull-whack” is a terrible whip with a long and very heavy lash and a short handle. It is used by drovers to intimidate refractory animals. The use of this weapon was the original application of bull-doze. It first found its way into print after the Civil War, when it came to mean intimidation for political purposes by violence or threats of violence. Since that time it has acquired a wider significance, and may be used with reference to intimidation of any kind.

**Bummer.**—Primarily an idle, worthless fellow. During the Civil War, a camp follower or straggler, especially as connected with General Sherman’s march from Atlanta to the sea. Now used in a political sense.

**Buncome, Bunkum, etc.**—Talking merely for talk’s sake. The original employment of the word in this sense is ascribed to a member

of Congress from Buncombe County, N. C., who explained that he was merely "talking for Buncombe," when his fellow-members could not comprehend why he was making a speech. The use of the term is now universal among English-speaking people.

**Burgoo.**—A Southern and Southwestern term akin in meaning to barbecue (*q. v.*). The feast, however, was furnished by hunters and fishermen; everything—fish, flesh, and fowl—being compounded into a vast stew. After this was disposed of, speeches were made, if the meeting was to have a political character. Dr. Edward Eggleston believes it to be peculiarly the property of the Blue Grass region in Kentucky. It is in current use among English-speaking sailors as a common name for thick oatmeal porridge (Clarke Russell's "Sailor's Language"). An Irish comic song of the last century runs:

"They put me to mess with some of the crew,  
They called it 'ban-yan-day' and gave me burgoo."

A well-informed Irish scholar of New York claims it as Irish, derived possibly from *boirce*, an ox, a word now obsolete.

**Burn this Letter.**—These words formed the postscript of a letter ascribed to James G. Blaine, published with others early in the campaign of 1884. From the context the phrase was capable of a discreditable interpretation, and as such became a sort of war-cry to be derisively hurled at Republicans by their Democratic opponents. (See Mulligan Letters.)

**Burrites.**—An independent political party organized by Aaron Burr in 1797. Its existence was short-lived, terminating with Burr's overwhelming defeat at the polls the same year.

**Bushwhacker.**—In politics, as in war, simply a "free-lance."

**Butternuts.**—Equivalent at the North to "copperheads" (*q. v.*). It is derived from the popular name of a coarse, homespun cloth commonly worn by Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, and similar in color to the dry outer shell of the butternut.

## C

**Cæsarism.**—Those are accused of Cæsarism—*i.e.*, imperialism—who favor the reëlection to the presidency for a third term of one who has already held the office twice.

**Campaign.**—A political contest; as, “the presidential campaign of 1888,” “the Harrison campaign,” etc. The word has been used with other than its warlike meaning for more than a century (*vide* H. Walpole, 1748). Its specific application to politics appears to be mainly American, though this usage has been to some extent adopted in England (*vide Pall Mall Gazette, et al.*).

**Canal Boy, The** — James Abram Garfield, twentieth president of the United States (1881), whose first venture in life was as the driver of a canal-boat team.

**Canuck.**—In Canada the nickname of French Canadians; in the United States a nickname for *all* Canadians. A parallel is found in the case

of Yankee (*q. v.*). The word is said to be the corruption of Connaught, that being the Canadian-French nickname for the English Canadians. Thus the French dub the English Connaughts (pronouncing it Canucks), and the English throw back the mispronounced epithet as a fitting nickname for its inventors. Also written Kanuck.

**Carpet-Bagger.**—After the Civil War, numbers of Northerners went South, some with honest intent, others with the hope of profit from irregular means. They were for the most part looked upon with suspicion by Southerners, and as they were generally Republican in politics and affiliated with the freedmen at the polls, the term came to have and still retains a political significance. It was unjustly applied in an opprobrious sense to many well-meaning men, but at the same time it admirably fitted the great horde of corrupt adventurers who at that time infested the South. Originally, however, a carpet-bagger was a “wild-cat banker” in the West—a banker, that is, who had no local abiding place, and could not be found when wanted.



**Caucus.**—A meeting of partisans, congressional or otherwise, to decide upon the action to be taken by the party. The word is said to have been used as early as 1724 (Gordon's "History of American Revolution"), and Dr. Trumbull, of Hartford, suggests its derivation from the Indian *cau-cau-as-ic*, one who advises. The most probable origin of the word is that given by Webster, namely, that it is a corruption of "calkers," the presumption being that the calkers and ship carpenters had a society which came to be known as the "calker's club." "This day learned that the caucus club met at certain times in the garret of Tom Dawes, the adjutant of the Boston Regiment." (*John Adams's diary, February, 1763.*)

"That mob of mobs, a *caucus*, to command,  
Hurl wild discussion round the maddening land "

—*A parody on Gray's Elegy, Boston, 1788.*

**Centennial State** = Colorado. So called because it was admitted to the Union in 1876, one hundred years after the declaration of Independence.

**Centralization.**—The political creed which favors large powers for the general government as opposed to the limitations of State rights.

**Chivalry.**—"The Southern Chivalry" was a common phrase before and during the Civil War. It was claimed as a proud title by Southerners and their friends, but has always been heard and used at the North with a shade of derisive contempt.

**Cincinnatus of the West** = William Henry Harrison, ninth president of the United States (1797-1801).

**Cipher Despatches.**—After the closely contested presidential campaign of 1876, the New York *Tribune* secured a number of telegraphic despatches in cipher, which emanated from the Democratic headquarters in New York. The key was most ingeniously discovered and the despatches translated and published, implicating the senders in corrupt dealings of the most flagrant nature in connection with the bribery of State returning boards whose decisions affected the vote for president.

**Civil Service Reform.**—The correction of

abuses in the public service, or, more specifically, the adoption of a system which shall not permit the removal of good and faithful officers for party reasons, and which shall prevent appointment to office as a reward for partisan services.

**Colossus of Independence, The** = John Adams, second President of the United States (1797-1801).

**Conventions.** — The different parties in counties, States, and in the nation at large, usually hold conventions prior to important elections. Delegates are selected in the various local political subdivisions. National conventions are held for the purpose of nominating candidates for the presidency. The delegates number many hundreds, and the votes are recorded as the roll of States is called from the presiding officer's desk. National conventions date back to 1830. Prior to that time general nominations were made in Washington, the congressmen representing the two great parties meeting in caucus for the purpose. Increased facilities for travel made really national conventions possible, but it was many years before they

attained their existing perfection of organization.

**Coons.**—A nickname for the Whig party during Henry Clay's time. In the campaigns of that day raccoons were painted on banners, and live specimens were frequently borne in processions.

**Coop.**—To "coop voters" is to collect them, as it were, in a coop or cage, so as to be sure of their services on election day. Liquor dealers are too often the "coopers," for obvious reasons.

**Copperhead.**—As early as 1863 this epithet was to be found in the daily press, applied to Northerners who sympathized with the cause of the South in the Civil War. The aptness of the name is apparent when it is explained that the "copperhead" proper is a venomous snake, nearly as deadly as the rattlesnake, but which gives no warning before he strikes. Prior to this the name had been applied to the Indians and to the Dutch colonists (*vide* W. Irving).

**Corn-Cracker State** = Kentucky.

**Cowboy.**—Now applied exclusively to West-

ern herdsmen, but originally to the Tory partisans of Westchester Co., N. Y., during the Revolution, and in 1861 to semi-secessionists in New England.

**Crackers, or Corn Crackers.**—In general the poor and ignorant whites of the Southern States. The name arises from the usual article of food among these people, namely, Indian corn cracked or ground into a coarse meal.

**Cracker State** = Georgia.

**Crawfish.**—To retire, gracefully or otherwise; to “back out.” Evidently derived from the habit of the crawfish—a small, lobster-like crustacean—which, when attacked on land, walks backward, with its biting claws raised before it for defence.

**Crédit Mobilier.**—The name by which “The Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency” was popularly known. This corporation was, in brief, a construction company for the Union Pacific Railroad. Banks of *Crédit Mobilier* in France are designed to aid all industrial enterprises, hence the adoption of the name in the present case. The scandal with which it is connected in

America occurred during the Forty-second Congress, and several members of the House were charged with having been improperly influenced by representatives of the company. Except in the cases of two (both of whom died within three months after the vote of censure was passed upon them), the charges were not sustained by the House.

**Creole State** = Louisiana.

**Crow.**—"To eat crow" means to recant or to humiliate one's self. To "eat dirt" is nearly equivalent. The story from which the phrase is drawn recites that an American who crossed the Niagara River to shoot on an Englishman's land was caught by the proprietor just after he had shot a crow, and was compelled on peril of his life to eat the bird. "I kin eat crow, but I don't hanker arter it," was his comment when twitted about the occurrence afterward.

**Crow, Chapman, crow! Crowing Cock.**  
(See "Democratic Rooster.")

## D

**Democrat.**—Democratic-Republican is the full official designation of this great party. It was, by a suggestive coincidence, originally, and until 1828-30, known as the Republican party, but affiliating at that time with the Democratic faction, it assumed the compound title which it still bears. The party overthrew the Federalists in 1800, electing Jefferson to the Presidency, and remained in power until 1848, when it was defeated by the Whigs and Free-Soilers. ("See Republicans.")

**Democratic Rooster.**—Every Democratic newspaper has on hand a cut of a "rooster" in the act of crowing. This is invariably printed at the head of a column announcing a party victory. The custom originated in Indiana in 1842. There were grave doubts as to the result of the local election. The editor of the Indianapolis *Sentinel*, Chapman by name, was accused of premature "crowing" by the rival Whig sheet,

the expression, "Crow, Chapman, crow!" being used as a headline. Further returns showed that the alleged crowing was justified, and Mr. Chapman in his next issue printed for the first time the emblem that has become so popular—an evidently victorious rooster with the legend, "We Crow," printed underneath. There are other versions of the rooster's birth, but the foregoing appears upon the whole the most trustworthy.

**Dirt.**—To "eat dirt" is to retract, to "eat humble-pie." No doubt ascribable to the old figure of speech which made the vanquished "bite the dust." It should be added that among the mountains of Tennessee and West Virginia it is alleged that some of the degraded inhabitants actually eat a kind of clay found there, and are known as "dirt-eaters."

**Doughface, or Doeface.**—In 1838 the Democratic Congressmen from the Northern States decided in caucus in favor of a resolution requiring all petitions relating to slavery to be laid upon the table without debate. This identified the party as it then existed with the slave-



holding interest, and its Northern representatives were stigmatized as "dough-faces." (Thurlow Weed's *Memoirs*, ii. 427.) The author is further indebted to Mr. W. P. Garrison for the following reference : George Bradburn (of Massachusetts), in a speech in Ohio (in 1856) said of "the baser sort of Northern demagogues," that John Randolph, "the caustic Virginian, in his congressional seat, branded them as 'Doefaces.' I am not sure but we have dulled the point of that pungent epithet by changing its original orthography. Randolph spelt the word, D-O-E-face, in allusion to the timid, startled look of that animal, which is said to shrink from the reflection of its own face in the water." (*Memorial of George Bradburn*, Boston, 1883.) "When that scornful Roanoke artist placed his branding-iron on the base brows of this whole race of demagogues, he exclaimed, in slow, sharp, quaint intonations of voice so peculiarly his own : 'It is not in our own strength that we of the South have always conquered you of the North. We have done it by using your own Doughfaces (*sic*), your Doughfaces (*sic*) ! They

are dirty dogs. They will eat dirty pudding' ”  
(*Ibid.*, p. 138).

**Dred Scott Decision.**—A decision rendered by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1857, to the effect that in law a negro slave was not a person but merely a chattel. Dred Scott was a slave who accompanied his master to the free States, resided there, returned to the South, was whipped by his master, and then brought suit to recover damages as a free-man.

**Drys.**—A nickname for the Prohibition or total abstinence party. (See “Wets.”)

**Dutch.**—The Democrats were called “the Dutch ” by their Whig opponents in 1842, in allusion to their candidate, Martin Van Buren. A popular song of the time ran :

“ We'll beat the Dutch,  
Hurrah for Tyler!  
We'll beat the Dutch,  
Or bust our b'iler.”

**Electors.**—The President is not chosen by a direct vote of the people. The voters of each State choose as many “electors” as the State has representatives in both Houses of Congress. These meet and vote for President and Vice-President under certain constitutional restrictions. Collectively, these electors are known as “the Electoral College,” though this term is not recognized as an official designation in the Constitution, and was not used even informally until about 1821. Many of the clearest-headed statesmen now living believe that a direct vote would more fairly represent the popular will.

**Electoral Commission.**—In order to decide between disputed election returns sent from Florida, Louisiana, Oregon, and South Carolina, during the presidential campaign of 1876, a special tribunal was created by Congress, January 29, 1877, under the above title. As appointed by Congress, it consisted of four Justices of the Supreme Court (2 Republicans and

2 Democrats), five Senators (3 Rep., 2 Dem.), and five Representatives (2 Rep., 3 Dem.). The four justices were directed to select a fifth, whose district was specified, though he was not named. The Hon. David Davis, of Illinois, would, in the natural order, have been chosen, and upon his vote in the commission the Democrats confidently counted. Just as the commission was organized, however (January 25, 1877), Judge Davis was elected to the United States Senate, and thereby disqualified from serving on the commission. The eligible justices were all Republicans, and the Hon. Joseph P. Bradley was chosen. Upon him, therefore, fell the weighty responsibility of the casting vote on matters which the National Congress had confessed itself unable to decide, and which threatened to precipitate a civil war. It is impracticable here to give a detailed account of what followed. A good summary will be found in "Lalor's Cyclopedia of Political Science," and the proceedings are published in full in the *Congressional Record*, part iv., vol. v., 1877. In brief, the commission decided that it could not

go behind the governor's certificate in the cases submitted. This rule of procedure was so worded, however, that a majority (Republican) of the commissioners held that in the case of Oregon, where the governor had certified *incorrectly*, it (the commission) was competent to correct the certificate in accordance with the laws of the State. This ruling gave Mr. Hayes, the Republican candidate for the presidency, a majority of one vote in the Electoral College (see "Electors"), he receiving 185, while Mr. Tilden, the Democratic candidate, received 184.

**Elephant.** — "The Republican Elephant" made his first appearance in *Harper's Weekly* (1868) in a cartoon drawn by Mr. Thomas Nast. The aptness of the conception at once appealed to the popular sense, the intelligence, *vis inertia*, and general unwieldiness of the dominant party being among its recognized characteristics. After that Mr. Nast made frequent use of the idea in his political cartoons, and eventually the elephant became common property. (See "Tiger.")

**Emancipation Proclamation.**—The proc-

clamation of President Lincoln, emancipating all slaves in the States then in armed rebellion against the United States (January 1, 1863).

**Era of Good Feeling.**—The administration of James Monroe as President (1817–1825). During this period bitter party strife almost wholly disappeared, owing mainly to a lack of organization among the political elements. In reality, the then Republican party was preparing to divide on new lines as “Adamites” and “Jacksonites” (*q. v.*). The phrase appeared as the title of a leader in the Boston *Centinel*, July 12, 1817, at the beginning of Monroe’s first term.

**Expunging Resolution.**—In 1834, a resolution of censure was passed by the Senate against President Jackson for his action in regard to the United States Bank. In 1837 Thomas H. Benton, of Missouri, secured the passage of a resolution expunging the censure from the record, which was accordingly done by drawing a broad black line around the entry in the Journal, and marking it, “Expunged by order of the Senate.”

**Father Abraham.**—See “Lincoln, Abraham.”

**Favorite Son.**—This term became so common, used in reference to local or State politicians, about 1866 that the *Nation* at last made it the text for an editorial article so severely satirical that “favorite sons” have not been so numerous since its publication. It occurs in the *Nation* as early as July 9, 1868.

**Federalists.**—The Federalists grew out of a wing of the colonial Whig party, which advocated a concentration of power in a general government. Alexander Hamilton and James Madison and John Jay were among its leaders, and jointly wrote a once famous series of essays, which were published in the *Federalist* over the common *nom de guerre* of “Publius.” Washington was the acknowledged head of the party, and its power was not broken until the Presidential election of 1800, when Thomas Jefferson and Aaron

Burr were elected by the then Republicans, defeating the Federalist candidates, John Adams and C. C. Pinckney. By 1820 the party may be said to have been practically out of the political race, though its traditions were proudly cherished for many years afterward. Its membership mostly fell back upon the name of "Whig" (*q. v.*) for a party designation. During the Civil War the Union troops were sometimes called "Federalists."

**Fence.**—To be "on the fence" in politics is to be neutral as regards the opposing parties.

**Fenian.**—As generally understood in America, the "Fenian Brotherhood" is a league pledged to the liberation of Ireland. The original meaning of the word is champion, but the Fians or Fenians first appear as mercenary troops hired by one of the early Irish kings, about A.D. 160.

**F. F. Vs.**—A satirical abbreviation of "First Families of Virginia," applied generally to what was known as the Southern aristocracy. The abbreviation was of Northern origin, and was in common use prior to the Civil War.



**Fifty-four-forty or Fight.**—An alliterative rallying cry which had a great run in 1844, when the location of the Northwestern boundary was in dispute with Great Britain. On the strength of a former treaty with Russia, it was held that our northwestern territory should extend to the parallel of  $54^{\circ} 40'$ , but a compromise was effected in 1846, by the extension of the boundary along the 49th parallel to Puget Sound. The Hon. William Allen, senator from Ohio and afterward governor of that State, is said to have been the originator of the phrase, which was often burlesqued by substituting *ph* for *f* in the spelling.

**Filibuster.**—To obstruct legislative action by calling for the yeas and nays, and the like, in order to gain time. Filibustering is usually practised by the minority in order to tire out the majority. Cognate words are *flibustier* (Fr.), *flibustero* (Span). The lexicographers are prolific with suggested derivations, as *flibote* (Span.); *flibote* (Fr.); *flyboat* (Eng.); *freibeuter* (Germ.); *free-booter* (Eng.)—the *r* being naturally corrupted into *l* by illiterate speakers. All these words have a lawless or piratical meaning, which is the

sense in which the term was originally employed in English. Filibuster came into general use in America after the Mexican war (1847), at a time when filibustering expeditions were talked of against the Spanish West Indies.

**Fire-Eater.**—A bitter Southern partisan. It came into use during the early anti-slavery days, and is of frequent occurrence in the journals of that time. It is equivalent to Bourbon (*q. v.*), but probably of earlier origin.

**Flaunting Lie, The.**—In 1854 Anthony Burns, a fugitive slave, was arrested in Boston by force of arms. Such was the popular excitement that a revenue cutter was detailed to convey him to Virginia. Charles G. Halpine (Miles O'Reilly) wrote a poem with the above title, stigmatizing the American flag as a "flaunting lie" when prostituted to slave hunting.—*New York Tribune*, June 13, 1854.

**Floaters.**—Voters of uncertain political affiliation who may perchance be secured by the highest bidder. (See "Blocks of Five.")

**Free-Soilers.**—This party began to show strength in 1848, with the avowed purpose of

restricting slavery to its then existing limits. It was preceded and grew out of the "Liberty Party," which never developed much strength, and in 1853 was merged in the Republican party.

**Free States.**—Those States of the Union in which slavery was abolished prior to the Civil War (1861).

**Free Trade and Sailor's Rights.**—A political campaign cry, which subsequently became a war-cry in dead earnest. It originated when Great Britain insisted upon her right of search for deserters on board American vessels, one of the inciting causes of the war of 1812-14. It was revived in 1854, about the beginning of the discussion between protection and free trade.

**Frémont and Victory.**—A Republican party cry, from the refrain of a campaign song (1856) written by the late R. R. Raymond, of Brooklyn, N. Y. :

Free soil, free speech, free press, free pen !

Frémont and Victory!

(*Air: The Marseillaise.*)

**Frémont Clubs.**—Political clubs formed by Free-soilers during the Frémont campaign (1856);

many Know-nothing associations became Frémont clubs.

**Fuss and Feathers.**—An army nickname of Gen. Winfield Scott, subsequently applied to him by his political opponents when he ran for the presidency in 1852.

**Gerrymander** (pronounced with the *g* hard, as in *get*).—"To gerrymander" a State is to arrange its political subdivisions so that in an election one party shall have an advantage over another. The term is derived from the name of Governor Gerry, of Massachusetts, who, in 1811, signed a bill readjusting the representative districts so as to favor the Democrats and weaken the Federalists, although the last named party polled nearly two-thirds of the votes cast. A fancied resemblance of a map of the districts thus treated led Stuart, the painter, to add a few lines with his pencil, and say to Mr. Russell, editor of the Boston *Centinel*, "That will do for a salamander." Russell glanced at it: "Salamander?" said he, "call it a Gerrymander!" The epithet took at once and became a Federalist war-cry, the map caricature being published as a campaign document. It is worthy of note that the word has recently found its way into English

journalism, but of course the American spelling was not to be accepted, and it appeared as "Jerimander." The *Spectator* of August 16, 1884, however, corrected the error, and Governor Gerry's fame is now properly perpetuated on both sides of the ocean. (See Ford's "Am. Citizen's Manual," vol. 1.) Other notable instances of gerrymandering are found in the "Shoe-string District" in Mississippi, the "Monkey-wrench District" of Iowa, the "Dumb-bell District" of Pennsylvania, and the "Horseshoe District" of New York.

**Gibraltar.**—The name of the renowned British fortress is frequently used to denote the stronghold of some party; as, "The Gibraltar of Whiggery," "The Gibraltar of Democracy," and the like.

**"Give 'em Jessie."**—A party war-cry current in the presidential campaign of 1856. Frémont, the Republican candidate, had fifteen years before made a runaway match with Jessie, daughter of Thomas H. Benton, and the popular favor with which runaway matches are apt to be regarded was made much of in this case, the

lady's name being freely used in song and story by her husband's political supporters.

**Golden Circle, Knights of.**—An organization formed among "Copperheads" (*q. v.*) at the North during the Civil War, to aid in the rescue of Confederate prisoners held by the United States. Also one of the alleged names of the Ku Klux Klan.

**Goose and Gridiron.**—Burlesque nicknames for the American eagle and the United States flag.

**Grand Old Party.**—The Republicans. The name was at first used in good faith by Republican campaign orators about 1880, but it was soon derisively abbreviated into G. O. P. by the opposing faction, and so much fun was made of it by Democratic orators and the comic papers that by the close of the campaign it was rarely used seriously.

**Grangers.**—"The Patrons of Husbandry," a secret society, nominally non-political, but really taking a hand in politics when occasion offered to favor agricultural interests. During the decade ending 1870 it attained great numer-

originating in New York in 1844, to designate the Conservative Democrats, as opposed to the Young Democracy or "Barnburners" (*q. v.*).

**Hyphenated Americans.**—As German-Americans, Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, and the like.



## H

**Half-Breed.**—Originally in its political sense a derisive nickname applied to certain Republicans of New York who wavered in their party allegiance during a bitter contest over the United States Senatorship in 1881.

**Hard-Cider Campaign** = the Harrison campaign of 1840. (See "Tippecanoe.")

**Hards.**—"Hards" and "Softs," or "Hard Shells" and "Soft Shells," are terms which are freely used in a variety of political connections; but the earliest conspicuous instance was in 1854, when the Hunkers received the name of "Hards," and their opponents, the "Barnburners," that of "Softs." Originally sects of the Baptist denomination were termed "Hard Shells" and "Soft Shells" by their unregenerate critics, the simile being drawn from the crab in its different stages of development.

**Harry of the West** = Henry Clay.

**Hawk-eye State** = Iowa. Named after a famous Indian chief.

**Hay-ward or Hay-warden.**—A township officer whose duty it is to impound stray cattle and feed them until they are redeemed by their owners. The word undoubtedly came over with the early colonists, since it is found in old English records, and is allied to “*hedge-ward*,” “*fence-ward*,” etc. It sometimes occurs as “*ha-ward*.” An absurd derivation has obtained some currency to the effect that this official gets his title from driving the cattle *hayward*—*i.e.*, in the direction of hay.

**Hayseeds** = Rustics. The “hayseed delegation” in a State legislature is supposed to consist of farmers or their representatives.

**Heelers.**—The followers or henchmen of a politician or of a party. The term always carries a contemptuous significance. (See “Boys.”)

**Hero of Chapultepec.**—Gen. Winfield Scott, a candidate for the presidency in 1852.

**Hickory.**—The hickory (*Pawcohicora* of the Indians) was adopted as the emblematic tree of the Democratic party during the Jackson cam-

paing of 1828. Jackson's military and political nickname was "Old Hickory," presumably from his moral, physical, and intellectual toughness and strength, and for many years no flag-pole was recognized as truly Democratic unless it was of hickory.

**Highbinders.**—Conspirators, ruffians. A term originally applied to Chinese detectives in California; afterward to political conspirators and the like.

**Higher Law.**—"There is a *higher law* than the Constitution," said the Hon. William H. Seward in his speech on the admission of California as a State. (U. S. Senate, March 11, 1850.) The phrase had long been familiar in Northern pulpits, but its use by the distinguished senator from New York gave it unwonted popularity, and it was adopted by the Abolitionists when they found their plans obstructed by existing laws. An appeal to a higher than human law had at times great political force, especially in the Northern States prior to the Civil War.

**High-Minded Federalists.**—A derisive

term applied in 1820 to a few Federalists who supported Governor Clinton, and were laughed at for their frequent use of the phrase "high-minded."

**Hindoos.**—A nickname of the Know-nothings (*q. v.*), arising from the alleged birth of their leader, Daniel Ulman, in Calcutta (1856).

**Honest Abe.**—See "Lincoln, Abraham."

**Hoodlums.**—A general name for toughs. It originated on the Pacific coast, as the designation of a company of young ruffians in San Francisco (about 1868). Subsequently it spread Eastward and attained some political significance; as "the hoodlum element in politics."

**Hoosier State** = Indiana. The origin of this nickname is not certain. Perhaps the most reasonable of several ingenious explanations is, that in the early days the customary challenge or greeting in that region was "Who's yer?" (Who's here?): pronounced hoosier. This is a generally accepted theory in the neighboring State of Kentucky.

**Hunkers, or Old Hunkers.**—Derived from the Dutch *hunk* (home). A local political term,

originating in New York in 1844, to designate the Conservative Democrats, as opposed to the Young Democracy or "Barnburners" (*q. v.*).

**Hyphenated Americans.**—As German-Americans, Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, and the like.

**Impending Crisis.**—In 1858, a book, entitled “The Impending Crisis of the South,” by H. R. Helper, of North Carolina, appeared. As events proved, the volume was prophetic in its forecasts ; and it no doubt had a powerful influence in precipitating the crisis that it foretold. Its title at once became a watchword with politicians on both sides.

**Ins and Outs.**—Those who are in or out of political power or office. The two words are, in reality, far more definite and expressive politically than are the ordinary party names, which often mean a certain thing in one State and quite a different thing elsewhere.

**Inside Track.**—In politics as on the race-course, the shortest road to victory.

**Irrepressible Conflict.**—Namely, that between Freedom and Slavery, current during the anti-slavery agitation, 1830-1865. The expression

was first used, or, at least, first brought into prominence, by William H. Seward, in a public address at Rochester, N Y., October 25, 1858 :  
“It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces.”

**Jacksonites.**—Followers of Andrew Jackson, seventh President of the United States. Opposite of Adamites (*q. v.*) (1821-1832). For a generation after Jackson's death, it was a standing joke that there were still "Jacksonites" in the rural districts who kept on voting for the "Hero of New Orleans," declaring that the story of his death was a Whig lie.

**Jayhawkers.**—Bushrangers, guerillas. The term originated during the Kansas troubles of 1856; was perpetuated during the Civil War (1861-65), and was subsequently borne by political marauders in general. The most probable derivation is from jayhawk, a fierce bird that seems to kill other creatures from mere love of the sport. Since Kansas has become a peaceful community, her inhabitants have humorously nicknamed themselves Jayhawkers.

**Jerrimander.**—See "Gerrymander."



## K

**Kangaroo Voting.**—The Australian ballot system, adopted with sundry modifications in many of the States.

**Kanuck.**—See "Canuck."

**Kearnyites.**—Followers of one Dennis Kearny, a Communist, who about 1870 commanded quite a strong faction among discontented workingmen. For a time he made his headquarters in what were known as the "Sand Lots," near San Francisco.

**Key-stone State** = Pennsylvania. The name arose from the fact that when the names of the original thirteen States were arranged arch-wise in their natural geographical order, Pennsylvania occupied the central position.

**Kickapoos.**—A secret Republican political organization in the territory of Oklahoma (1888)

**Kicker.**—One who revolts against party discipline—kicks over the traces, as it were.

**Kids.**—Often applied to the younger element

of any political party. The antithesis of "Mossbacks" (*q. v.*).

**Kitchen Cabinet.**—A cabal headed by Martin Van Buren, which gained great influence with Andrew Jackson during his term as President (1829-1833), in opposition to the Vice-President, John C. Calhoun. (See "Nullification.") It resulted in the breaking up of the Cabinet.

**Know-nothings.**—A secondary phase of the "American Party" (*q. v.*), organized in New York in 1853, by E. Z. C. Judson, better known as "Ned Buntline." Members of the party answered all questions concerning it with the response, "I don't know," whence the popular name. The secret name is said to have been "The Sons of '76." The cardinal principle of the society was that "Americans must rule America." After some notable successes at the polls, the society went to pieces, owing to the extreme measures proposed by its leaders. These declared war to the hilt against Roman Catholics, advocated the repeal of all naturalization laws, and reserved all offices for native-

born Americans. It did not altogether disappear from national politics until 1860. A curious local meaning is found in Massachusetts, where the crossing of two railroads at grade is termed a "Know-nothing." The name was applied in consequence of a railroad accident which occurred just before the election of Governor Gardner, in 1854. He was the Know-nothing candidate, and his first official act was to secure the passage of a law requiring all trains to stop before reaching such crossings.

**Ku Klux Klan.**—A secret association of Southerners formed shortly after the war. It was otherwise known as "The Invisible Empire," as "The Knights of the White Camellia," "Of the Golden Circle," and a score of other names. It is said on good authority (see *Century Magazine*, July, 1884) to have been originally organized by a few young men for amusement during the period of stagnation after the close of hostilities. It soon, however, outgrew the design of its founders, branches being established all over the South, and its political influence

became almost absolute. That it was directly and indirectly chargeable with outrages against settlers from the North, and against negroes, is not to be denied, but it is also believed that it was largely instrumental in preserving order during a period when lawlessness was rife at the South. The name is an alliterative corruption of the Greek *κυκλος* (a circle), the "Klan" being added to enhance the strange jingle of consonants. The Southern negroes, who lived in mortal terror of the "Klan," believed that the name was associated with certain audible "clucks," by means of which signals were supposed to be interchanged during midnight raids. The Ku Klux Klan was founded in June, 1866, and it was nominally disbanded by its presiding "Grand Wizard" in February, 1869. Ku Klux raids were common, however, for several years after that date.

**Land of Steady Habits** = Connecticut.

**Landslide.**—An unexpected and overwhelming change in the popular vote.

**Latter Day Saints** = The Mormons. A self-applied designation, used ironically by outsiders.

**Lecompton Democrats.**—Members of that party who supported the proslavery constitution adopted at Lecompton, Kan., in 1857.

**Lewisites.**—A local New York term applied to the supporters of Morgan Lewis, who was governor of the State in 1804. It was the "swell" party of the day.

**Liberal.**—This term acquired special significance from a movement headed by Carl Schurz in Missouri, in 1870, and resulting in a division of the local Republicans into "Liberals" and "Radicals," the latter being equivalent to "Stalwart" as subsequently used.

**Lincoln, Abraham.**—Sixteenth President

of the United States (1861-1866); nicknamed "The Rail-splitter," "Father Abraham," "Honest Old Abe," "The Martyr President." The refrain of a popular song of the time ran :

"We're coming, Father Abraham, five hundred thousand more,"

in reference to a lately issued call for 500,000 volunteers.

**Little Giant.**—A nickname for Stephen A. Douglas, who was small of stature, but of great intellect. When he was nominated for the Presidency in 1860, campaign clubs, calling themselves "Little Giants," were organized and uniformed after the manner of the "Wideawakes" (*q. v.*). The term has been applied to many public men of small stature.

**Little Mac.**—The army nickname of Gen. George B. McClellan. It became conspicuous politically when he was the Democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1864.

**Little Rhody.**—A nickname for Rhode Island, the smallest State in the Union.

**Little Van.**—Martin Van Buren, eighth President of the United States.

**Lobby.**—Lobbyists are persons who frequent the approaches to legislative halls and seek to influence legislation by “lobbying,” which may mean mere argument or absolute bribery. The lobby is also called the “Third House.”

**Local Option.**—A plan whereby each town decides whether or not it will permit the sale of spirituous liquor within its borders.

**Loco, or Loco-Foco.**—Thirty years ago the Democrats were quite generally nicknamed “Loco-focos.” Originally the term was invented as an advertising “catch” by a New York dealer in the then newly invented friction matches and cigárs (perhaps from the Spanish *loco*, crazy, and *foco*, flash.) Its political application came about in this wise: In 1835, there was a split in Tammany Hall over the nomination of a candidate for Congress. The friends of each attempted to pack a meeting, and in the scene of confusion which ensued the gas was turned off by connivance of one faction. The other faction, however, in anticipation of such a crisis, had come provided with loco-foco matches and candles, and the room was at once relighted.

The *Courier and Enquirer* dubbed the anti-monopolists, who had used the matches, "Loco-focos," and the name was shortly affixed to the whole party.

**Log-Cabin and Hard Cider.**—A war-cry of the Harrison campaign in 1839, when, in honor of the candidate's supposed antecedents, log-cabins were erected in many large towns, and in miniature shape hauled through the streets in processions, with barrels of cider as fitting and certainly popular accessories. (See "Wigwam.")

**Log-Rolling.**—Briefly, "coöperation." Derived from the custom which prevails among lumbermen of joining forces to roll logs to the water-side. In politics Republicans may, for instance, say to Democrats: "If you will support Smith for governor, we will support Jones for the Senate," thus coöperating for mutual advantage. The same system, it is almost needless to say, is carried into legislation.

**Long John.**—John Wentworth, a native of New Hampshire, but a leading editor and statesman in Illinois from about 1850 to 1880.



**Loose Constructionists.**—Originally those who favored a broad interpretation of the Constitution, giving increased powers to the central Government. Never used as a party name, but merely as a descriptive title. They may be regarded as the germ of the Republican party. (See "Strict Constructionist.")

**Lumber State** = Maine.

## M

**Machine.**—A machine politician yields unswerving obedience to the party leaders. Thus, the “machine wing of the Republican party came to be known as such under the leadership of the late Mr. Roscoe Conkling, who was a strenuous advocate of the system.” The word has been used in this general sense, however, since early in the present century.

**Mahoneist.**—A follower of General Mahone, late of the Confederate service, who organized a revolt against the “Bourbon Democracy” in West Virginia in 1873. (See “Readjusters.”)

**Maine.**—The “Pine-tree State,” the “Lumber State.” The State seal bears a pine-tree as one of its symbols.

**Maine Law.**—A prohibitory law against the sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage. First adopted in Maine in 1851. Often used colloquially in a general sense, as, “Vermont may pass a ‘Maine Law.’”

**Mason and Dixon's Line.**—A boundary line surveyed in 1766 by two English surveyors, named Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, to settle a dispute as to territory between Pennsylvania and Maryland. It follows the fortieth parallel of latitude, and was originally marked by mile-stones having on one side the armorial bearings of Penn, and on the other those of Lord Batimore. "Hang your clothes to dry on Mason and Dixon's line" was a saying current with variations in the early days of the anti-slavery agitation.

**Mean Whites.**—The poor or non-slaveholding whites of the Southern States. The term was more commonly used before the Civil War than at present.

**Middle States.**—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.

**Middle Western States.**—West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas.

**Mileage.**—A certain percentage per mile allowed by the United States Government nominally to defray the travelling expenses of members

of Congress and others. It is estimated on the distance from Washington of the member's residence. "Constructive mileage" is paid whether the journey has actually been taken or not; as, for instance, when an extra session of Congress is called, the members being still in Washington after adjournment. Many honorable men have refused to take advantage of this allowance, regarding it as an imposition upon the public.

**Mill Boy of the Slashes.**—A nickname of Henry Clay, who in his youth tended a mill in a region known as "the Slashes," near his birth-place. It was invented for his benefit, to catch the popular vote when he became a candidate for office.

**Missouri Compromise.**—A name popularly given to an act of Congress passed in 1820 at the beginning of the anti-slavery agitation. It admitted Missouri as a slave-holding State, but prohibited slavery in advance in any State admitted thereafter, and lying north of the latitude  $36^{\circ} 30'$ , the northern boundary of Missouri.

**Monkey-Wrench District.**—The third

Congressional District of Iowa (1890), so called from its resemblance in general shape to a monkey-wrench. The formation of this district is cited by Democrats as a flagrant case of Republican "gerrymandering" (*q. v.*). (See *New York World*, August 20, 1890.)

**Monroe Doctrine.**—The theory on which the United States considers as dangerous to its peace and safety any attempt of European powers farther to extend their jurisdiction in the Western Hemisphere, and holds itself aloof from any participation in the political affairs of the Eastern Hemisphere. This doctrine was first officially propounded by James Monroe, fifth President of the United States, in his message of December 2, 1823.

**Moonshiners.** — Illicit whiskey distillers. Common in the mountain ranges of the Southern States. It is of Irish or Scotch origin.

**Morey Letter.**—Near the end of the Garfield campaign in 1880, a letter was published by one of the minor New York morning papers, purporting to have been written by Mr. Garfield to "H. L. Morey, Employers' Union, Lynn,

Mass." It expressed sympathy with capital rather than with labor, and was evidently intended to deal a final blow at Garfield's chances for election. The letter was promptly proved to be a forgery, and no such person as Morey has ever been found.

**Morgan.**—"Morganized," "A good enough Morgan until after election," etc., are phrases now rarely encountered, but they had a telling significance in 1826, when it was alleged that one Morgan had been murdered by the Masons, and a bitter political war followed, the Masons seeking at that time to gain control of public affairs. In his autobiography (vol. i., p. 319), Mr. Thurlow Weed says: "The election of 1827 elicited an accusation against me which assumed proportions not dreamed of by those with whom it originated. . . . Ebenezer Griffin, Esq., one of the council of the 'Kidnappers,' who was going to Batavia to conduct the examination, observed laughingly to me: 'After we have proven that the body found at Oak Orchard is that of Timothy Monroe, what will you do for a Morgan?' I replied in the same spirit: 'That

is a good enough Morgan for us until you bring back the one you carried off.' ” On the following day the Rochester *Daily Advertiser* gave what became the popular version of the story—namely, that Mr. Weed had declared that, whatever might be proven, the body “was a good enough Morgan until after the election.”

**Mossbacks.**—A subdivision of the Democratic party in Ohio, and elsewhere, supposed to comprise the old fogies of the party, as opposed to the “Kids.” In the vernacular, a “moss-back” is a large and savage “snapping” or “alligator turtle,” that has lived so long in the depths of some pond that his back has become covered with a growth of moss-like algæ.

**Mother of Presidents.**—Virginia, so called prior to the Civil War, because so many of her sons had held the office.

**Mugwump.**—An Independent Republican ; one who sets himself up to be better than his fellows ; a Pharisee. On the nomination of the Hon. James G. Blaine for the presidency (June 6, 1884), a strong opposition developed among disaffected Republicans calling themselves “In-

dependents." The movement originated at a meeting in Boston (June 7), and was promptly taken up in New York and elsewhere. The supporters of the regular nomination affected to believe that these Independents set themselves up as the superiors of their former associates. They were called "dudes, Pharisees, and hypocrites," and on June 15, 1884, the New York *Sun* called them "Mugwumps." The word was forthwith adopted by the public as curiously appropriate, though for a time its meaning was problematical. It appeared that the term had been in use colloquially in some parts of New England, notably on the Massachusetts coast. Thence it had been carried inland, and was used in large type as a head-line in the Indianapolis *Sentinel* as early as 1872—this on the authority of Mr. H. F. Keenan, who was at the time editor of that journal and had picked up the word in New England. In this instance it was used to emphasize some local issue. After this the word seems to have lain perdu until resuscitated by the *Sun*, on March 23, 1884, when it in turn applied it in a local issue at



Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., printing "Mugwump D. O. Bradley" in large type at the top of one of its prominent columns. After the Independent movement was started, the word was launched on its career of popularity, but not until September 6, 1884, was it authoritatively defined. The *Critic* of that date contained a note from Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, of Hartford, to the effect that the word was of Algonquin origin, and occurred in Eliot's Indian Bible, being used to translate such titles as lord, high-captain, chief, great man, leader, or duke. In Matthew vi. 21 it occurs as *Mukquomp*, and again in Genesis xxxvi. 40-43, and several times in Second Samuel, xxiii. The word aroused wide-spread philological discussion, which continued long after the campaign had ended. As is frequently the case in American politics, it was used as a term of derision and reproach by one section, and accepted with a half-humorous sense of its aptness by the other.

**Mulligan Letters.**—James Mulligan, book-keeper for Mr. Warren Fisher, of Boston, was summoned as a witness before a Congressional

Investigating Committee in 1876, and testified regarding a number of letters written by James G. Blaine to Mr. Fisher. These letters were read by Mr. Blaine in the House. Other similar letters were afterward produced by Messrs. Fisher and Mulligan. The prominent place occupied by these documents in the public press of 1884 was due simply to the dispute over the question whether they were or were not discreditable to Mr. Blaine.

**Murcheson Letter.**—See “Sackville Incident.”

## N

**Natick Cobbler, The.**—Henry Wilson, Vice-President of the United States (1872–1876). In boyhood he learned the shoemaker's trade in Natick, Mass.

**National Democrats.**—A division of the party not so strongly opposed to centralization as the majority.

**Native Americans.**—See "Know-nothings."

**New Jersey a Foreign State.**—The saying is so common that "New Jersey is not one of the United States" that among the ignorant classes there are some who actually believe it. The saying originated just after the downfall of the First Napoleon, when Joseph Bonaparte and Prince Murat sought an asylum in America. Being alien, they were obliged to secure special acts of the legislature to hold real estate. This was refused them by Pennsylvania, but granted by New Jersey. Upon which they

bought land and built a magnificent house (now fallen to ruin, by the way) at Bordentown. They were very free with their money and proved profitable acquisitions for the community. Upon this, the neighboring States, consumed with envy at the good fortune of the more liberal-minded Jerseymen, twitted them with having an ex-king of Spain to rule over them and jokingly averred that they were no longer in the Union. The jest bids fair to survive indefinitely.

**New York** = The Empire State. From its standing in population and wealth.

**Nicknames.**—So many and varied are the nicknames of men and places in the United States that only a selection has been made from the more noteworthy and prominent. They will be found in general alphabetically arranged, and in some cases grouped, where an individual or a State has several well-recognized nicknames.

**Nullification.**—In 1832, leading politicians in South Carolina, led by John Randolph, advocated the right to “nullify the United States tariff,” which was held to be oppressive to the interests of the State, and legislative measures

were adopted to that end. Andrew Jackson, then President, held the act to be treasonable, and sent General Scott to Charleston to maintain the authority of the United States. This he did so effectually that the act was repealed.

**Nutmeg State** = Connecticut. From the alleged manufacture of wooden nutmegs in that State.

## O

**Ohio Gong, The.**—A nickname of Senator William Allen, of Ohio, due to his peculiarly resonant voice. He was also called "Earthquake Allen."

**Ohio Idea.**—The advocacy of an irredeemable paper currency, held by a considerable party in the Western States, under the leadership of Governor Allen, of Ohio, in 1873.

**O. K.**—A common abbreviation for "all correct." The story runs that Andrew Jackson (President, 1825-33) puzzled his secretary by endorsing "O. K." on official papers that met his approval. Inquiry brought out the information that it stood for "all correct," and the secretary was left to infer that his chief spelled it "orl korrekt." No doubt the story is a gross exaggeration, manufactured for campaign purposes, though it is admitted that Jackson was more of a soldier than a scholar.

**Old Abe.**—See "Lincoln, Abraham."

**Old Bullion.**—Thomas Hart Benton, of Missouri, so called because of his able advocacy of a gold and silver currency after the suspension of the United States Bank, in 1833.

**Old Line Whigs.**—Whigs of the conservative type (1840-1852).

**Old Man Eloquent, The.**—John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States.

**Old Public Functionary.**—James Buchanan, President of the United States, just prior to the secession of the South, 1859, alluded to himself in a message to Congress under the above impersonal sobriquet. It was taken up by his political opponents and freely bandied about during the remaining months of his administration. He was also nicknamed "The Sage of Wheatland" (his estate) and "The Bachelor President."

**Old Whitey.**—The name of the horse ridden by General Taylor during the war with Mexico. This animal was popular as a political symbol during the presidential campaign of 1849, which resulted in Taylor's election to the presidency.

**Old Zach.**—Maj.-Gen. Zachary Taylor,

twelfth President of the United States. He was also called "Old Rough-and-Ready" by his soldiers.

**Omnibus Bill.**—A bill proposed in the House of Representatives by Mr. Springer, of Illinois, in 1888, to enable certain Territories to organize and qualify as States without the special legislation that had previously been required in such cases.

**One Man Power.**—After the War for Independence there developed in the States of the young republic a rooted jealousy of the power vested in such officers as governors of States, mayors of cities, and the like. This was probably a survival of the popular dislike of Crown governors in colonial times. It was popularly known as "One Man Power," and the phrase still survives on political banners, transparencies, and the like, though the officers specified now hold without question stricter authority than was possible in the early days.

**Outs.**—See "Ins and Outs."



**Pair-off.**—This verb is used when two members of a legislative or other body agree to refrain from voting, so that one or both of them may be absent when a vote is taken without affecting the final result. Pairing-off was first practised during a contest for the speakership of the House in 1839. It was at first regarded with disfavor, but is now permitted as legitimate, save in cases of great moment, not only in America, but throughout the civilized world.

**Panhandle.**—A narrow strip of territory belonging to West Virginia. It extends northward between Pennsylvania and Ohio. Texas and Nevada also have panhandles.

**Parmateer or Palmateer.**—Equivalent to "electioneer." A local phrase, confined, it is believed, to Rhode Island. Derived, no doubt, from the same source as parliament (French *parler*, to speak).

**Particularists.**—A wing of the post-revolutionary Whigs, which favored State rights as

opposed to the "Strong Government Whigs" (*q. v.*), who were the "centralizers" of that early period. They were also known later on as "Anti-Federals."

**Pasters.**—Narrow slips of paper gummed on the back and bearing printed names of candidates. These are distributed by local political leaders prior to or during an election, so that voters may readily rearrange ballots to suit their own individual preferences. Pasters, in short, reduce "scratching" (*q. v.*) to a system.

**Patched Breeches.**—A nickname applied to Gov. William L. Marcy, of New York, by his detractors, alleging that he had upon an occasion made the State pay a certain personal tailor's bill.

**Pathfinder.**—A nickname of Gen. John C. Frémont, given him on account of his distinguished services as an explorer (1837-1853) of the then unknown West. The nickname was very popular during Frémont's unsuccessful campaign for the presidency as the candidate of the Free-soil party in 1856.

**Patronage.**—The offices of which a politician has, or pretends to have, control, and which

he promises to his followers as the reward for their services. (See "Spoils.")

**Paw-Paws.**—Equivalent to "bushwhackers" (*q. v.*), current in Missouri. The paw-paw is a wild fruit of the genus *Asimina*, on which the bushwhackers are supposed to subsist.

**Peculiar Institution.**—In full, "the *peculiar* domestic *institution* of the South"—meaning negro slavery. It is believed to have been first used in the South Carolina *Gazette*, which advised that all strangers from the North should be kept under surveillance because of "the dangers which at present threaten the peculiar domestic institutions of the South" (*circa* 1852). The phrase is found in the New York *Tribune* of October 19, 1854, and soon became part of the current speech of the time.

**Pelican State**=Louisiana. The figure of a pelican with extended wings is the chief device borne on the great seal of the State.

**Pipe-Laying.**—Making arrangements to procure fraudulent votes, or to compass any object by underhand means. It is said to have been first used about 1848, in connection with a

plot to import voters to New York from Philadelphia. Extensive works in connection with laying Croton water-pipes were then in progress, and thence the phrase acquired its accepted significance. The Whig leaders were actually indicted for the alleged attempts at fraud, but were acquitted by the jury before which they were tried.

**Pine-Tree State** = Maine. From the extensive forests of white pine within its borders; a pine-tree appears on the State seal.

**Plank.**—See “Platform.”

**Platform.**—A statement of the principles avowed by a political party. The word, used in the same general sense and applied to declarations of faith and the like, was used as long ago as 1576. (See Tomson’s Revision of the Geneva Bible.) The subdivisions of the platform are often referred to as its “planks.” Although the term fell into disuse in England for many years, it has now reappeared.

**Plug Ugly.**—See “Ashlander.”

**Plumed Knights.**—Republican campaign clubs formed during the presidential campaign

of 1884, in honor of Mr. Blaine, the Republican candidate. The name "Plumed Knight" was given to Mr. Blaine by Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, who described him in an address as the "plumed knight of the debate."

**Pocket Veto.**—The President may legally retain an act of Congress for ten days without signing it. If in the meantime Congress adjourns, the bill is in effect vetoed by being kept, as it were, in the President's pocket. It is believed that Andrew Jackson was the first to resort to the pocket veto, in 1830, in the case of a government subscription for stock in certain turnpike roads in Kentucky and elsewhere.

**Poke-Berry Juice.**—A punning reference to the surname of the Hon. James K. Polk (pronounced *poke*), who was chosen President of the United States in 1845. Banners and transparencies were loyally stained with the dark purple juice of the common poke-berry during the campaign which resulted in Mr. Polk's election.

**Porkopolis.**—A nickname for Cincinnati,

Ohio, because of her enormous business in pork-packing.

**Practical Politics.**—The minor details of party management, including practices that are corrupt and criminal, as well as those that are legitimate and honorable. The phrase in this sense was in common colloquial use in 1875. In 1889 it was used by the Bishop of New York in an address in St. Paul's Chapel on the occasion of the Washington Centennial.

**Primary.**—A preliminary meeting held by the voters of a district, usually for the purpose of making nominations, or electing delegates to nominating conventions.

**Prohibitionists.**—A political party which favors the prohibition by law of the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits. It scored its first great success in the passage of the "Maine Law" (*q. v.*) in 1851, and often places local and national candidates in the field in important elections.

**Prox, or Proxy.**—A term used in Rhode Island and Connecticut to denote an election at which voting by proxy was allowed under cer-

tain conditions. In the Rhode Island Colonial Records, vol. ii., p. 39, is this passage : “. . . Therefore it seems a kind of necessity to admitt of voting by proxy from such as are not present, or cannot conveniently ther come.” A vote, from which the above is quoted, was passed May 5, 1664, Benedict Arnold, great-grandfather of Arnold the traitor, being governor. In the October following, voting by “proxces” was duly authorized by the General Assembly (*Id.*, p. 62). Col. T. W. Higginson, of Newport, R. I., writes that “proxy” is still used in Rhode Island, not to designate an election where proxies are used—the practice being abandoned—but to describe the printed ballots themselves ; as : “Where are the proxies ?” He mentions also a ballot headed “Fish Prox,” which was a ticket in the interest of fishermen (*Magazine of American History*, vol. xiii., p. 406).

**Pull.**—A common inquiry among politicians, when considering the qualifications of a candidate, is : “What sort of a pull has he in his district ?” or, “With the governor ?” and the like. In other words, “What influence, honorable or

dishonorable, can he bring to bear to secure his election, or further party interests? No doubt it was primarily a variant of "wire-pulling" (*q. v.*). It began to be used colloquially in New York about 1880.



## R

**Radical.**—The converse of Liberal (*q. v.*).

**Rail-Splitter.**—A nickname for Abraham Lincoln, one of the incidents of whose early career was the fact of his having earned money for his education by splitting rails for a neighboring farmer. Clubs of "Rail-splitters" were formed during the campaign which resulted in his election, and alleged genuine Lincoln-split rails were carried in the processions of the period. These were frequently of black walnut, such was the cheapness and abundance of that now scarce and valuable wood in Mr. Lincoln's youth.

**Randolph of Roanoke.**—John Randolph of South Carolina (1773-1833).

**Readjusters.**—A local Virginia party formed by General Mahone, late of the Confederate service, in 1878. It opposed Democratic ascendancy in the State and favored conditional repudiation of the State debt. "Readjusters"

have appeared elsewhere at various times, mainly in border feuds and the like.

**Read Out.**—A man is read out of a party when he is denounced as a deserter from its ranks. The phrase probably originated from “reading out the bans,” etc., in church.

**Reconstruction.**—After the Civil War the question of restoring the lately seceded States to their former places in the Union became the leading civil problem of the time. The measures introduced into Congress were popularly known as Reconstruction Bills, and it was common at the time to hear or read such phrases as “a reconstructed rebel,” “the reconstructed States,” etc. The “reconstruction period” may be said to cover the decade immediately succeeding the war (1865–1875). At that time a late rebel was “reconstructed” or “unreconstructed” according as he had or had not taken the “Amnesty Oath,” and the term in all possible combinations was of frequent occurrence in the journals of the day.

**Republicans.**—The name was, curiously enough, originally suggested by Thomas Jeffer-

son as a desirable substitute for "Anti-Federalist" (*q. v.*), though there was at the first an attempt to name it "Democratic-Republican." Partisan lines were distinctly drawn between Federalists and Republicans as early as 1793. In 1805 the Republicans all became Democrats by the simple and harmless process of changing their name. It is somewhat appalling to reflect what would be the result of such a change if effected nowadays. The name was revived in 1856, and adopted by the disaffected elements of the other parties, mainly Independent Democrats, Whigs opposed to slavery, and Abolitionists (using the word in its Northern sense). Its first national convention was held at Philadelphia in 1856, nominating John C. Frémont, who was defeated by James Buchanan in the subsequent election. Four years later the party came into power, and retained it until 1884, when Grover Cleveland, then Governor of New York, was elected by a very close vote. In 1888 the Republicans again carried the day, electing Benjamin Harrison, of Illinois, President.

**Rider.**—In legislative practice a "rider" is

a bill added to another bill, though not necessarily belonging with it, so that the two may be passed together as one bill. This is usually done in the case of a measure which is sure to be vetoed if presented by itself, but which, if attached to some important appropriation bill, must necessarily be approved. In common speech, a rider is the top rail of a zig-zag fence. Such a fence is "staked and ridered" when stakes are driven in the angles and a rider laid on top of them. A rider is not an essential part of a fence, nor of a bill, but it adds considerably to the effectiveness of both.

**Ring.**—A combination of persons, as "the Tweed Ring," "the Whiskey Ring," etc. (*q. v.*), who play into each other's hands for mutual advantage. It appears to have come into general use shortly after the Civil War.

**Roorback.**—In 1844 alleged extracts from the "Travels of Baron Roorback" were published for political purposes, and the ruse was so successful that "roorback" became a general term for a political forgery or fiction.

**"Rough and Ready."**—A nickname of

Zachary Taylor, twelfth President of the United States. It was earned during his military service in the Mexican War (1846-1848).

**Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion.**—During the closing days of the presidential campaign of 1884 a special meeting, to call out the opinions of the clergy, was held at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, in New York, in the interest of the Republicans. Some five hundred attended, all denominations being nominally represented. The principal address was made by the Rev. R. B. Burchard, D.D., a Protestant divine, who committed the extraordinary blunder of describing the Democrats as the party of “Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion.” Mr. Blaine, the Republican candidate for President, was present, and failed to make a fitting rejoinder, but the Democratic managers were not slow to profit by the mistake. The country was placarded with these three fatal R’s, and, as the result proved, this bit of alliteration lost the battle for the Republican party. The vote was so close in New York State that the result was for some days in doubt, and as the national result depended

on this vote, a dangerous excitement prevailed. The State was eventually found to have gone Democratic by only 1,149 votes, and it was credibly in evidence that far more than that number were lost to the Republicans in consequence of the momentous remark with which the reverend gentleman concluded his address.

**“Rummies.”**—A local name for the political opponents of the temperance party in Maine.

**Run.**—When a man makes up his mind to become a candidate for an elective office it may be said of him, “He is going to run for governor,” or the like, or “The Republicans are going to run him for governor,” or “He is making a good run,” etc. This usage is, at this writing, believed to be of American origin. The figure is drawn evidently from the race-track.

**Sage.**—A number of prominent American statesmen have been popularly known with this prefix. Thomas Jefferson, for instance, was the "Sage of Monticello ;" William H. Seward, the "Sage of Auburn ;" Horace Greeley, the "Sage of Chappaqua," etc. The title, of course, is only given to men of advanced years, and often not until they have retired from public life.

**Sage-Brush State**=Nevada, vast stretches of its territory being covered by the *Artimisia Ludoviciana*, or sage-brush.

**Sagnichts.**—"Saynaughts," a German nickname for Know-nothings (*q. v.*).

**Salary Grab.**—During the Forty-second Congress, 1871-73, a bill was passed to increase the salaries of the Executive and of Senators and Representatives. The popularly obnoxious feature of the act was that it gave back-pay for the entire session to the very men who had the

measure under consideration, and eventually voted upon it. Such a howl of indignation went up from the whole country that the act was repealed, save in the Executive clauses. It should be added that many members of Congress never drew the money to which they were thus lawfully entitled, and many who had yielded to the temptation paid back into the treasury the money which they had drawn.

**Salt Boiler, The.**—A nickname of the Hon. Thomas Ewing, Senator, and a member of Harrison's and Taylor's Cabinets. When a boy he is said to have worked as a boiler-tender at the salt springs of Ohio. He was the father of Thomas Ewing, late Brigadier-General of Volunteers.

**Salt River.**—An imaginary stream up which a defeated candidate is supposed to be sent, and whence he is not expected to come back. The origin of the expression is as follows : Salt River, geographically, is a tributary of the Ohio. Its source is in Kentucky, and being very crooked and difficult of navigation, it was, in the early days, a favorite stronghold for river pirates.



These highwaymen were in the habit of preying upon the commerce of the Ohio, and rowing their plunder up Salt River, whence it was never recovered. Hence it came to be said of anything that was irrevocably lost, "It's rowed up Salt River." By an easy transition it was applied to unsuccessful candidates. "He has been rowed (or rode) up Salt River;" or, "We'll row him (or ride him) up Salt River next fall."

**Sam.**—A nickname of the "Know-nothings," or American party, current 1854 to 1860.

**Sand Lots.**—See "Kearnyites."

**Scallawag.**—An opprobrious epithet commonly applied to natives of the Southern States who joined the Republicans or Carpet-Baggers during the Reconstruction period (1865-1875). Prior to acquiring this political meaning, the term was in common use to denote in general a contemptible person.

**Scratch.**—To make changes in the list of candidates as borne upon the regular party ticket; to scratch out or erase names of candidates. Scratchers are persons who erase names from the regular party "ticket" (*q. v.*); or make

changes by means of pasters or otherwise to suit their own views.—See “Young Scratchers.”

**Seven Mule Barnum.**—A nickname applied by Republicans to the late William A. Barnum, of Connecticut, a prominent Democratic politician, who is said to have used the words “seven mules” in a cipher despatch, meaning “seven thousand dollars.”

**Shoestring District.**—A “gerrymandered” election district in Mississippi, so called because of its great length (250 miles) and its narrowness (30 miles).

**Short Hairs.**—See “Swallow Tails.”

**Silver Grays.**—Conservative Whigs. First used at the party convention of 1850, from which the conservatives, most of them men somewhat advanced in years, “bolted,” their white hair suggesting the idea to a bystander, who called out, “There go the Silver Grays!” The point of difference was the administration of President Fillmore, which the conservatives refused to approve. After withdrawing from the regular convention, the “Silver Grays” organized one of their own, when the semi-respectful

nickname became fixed upon them, and was even adopted by their speakers.

**Slate.**—"To make up the slate," "His name is on the slate," etc., are common expressions relating to the preparation of party nominations. No authentic account of its origin has been found, save the natural inference that somewhere in early days of party nominations a school slate was used in making up the ticket, and became *the* slate of local politicians.

**Slave Code.**—State laws relating to the possession of slaves. It was held by the Abolitionists (*q. v.*) that there was no United States law or slave code whereby the general government could hold slaves. The phrase is of frequent occurrence in the Abolition and Free-soil papers prior to 1860.

**Slaveocracy.**—A not very happy though perhaps justifiable compound of "slave" and the Greek *κρατεῖν*, meaning simply the persons representing the political power of the slave States (*q. v.*). An early instance of the word is in the New York *Express* of September 4, 1848. Later it was of frequent occurrence in the daily

press, especially at the North, where it carried a strong flavor of dislike or contempt.

**Slave Oligarchy.**—The Slaveholders' Oligarchy is the more proper form. Indeed, it is believed to have been at first used in that way, but during the heated days of the anti-slavery agitation it was popularly contracted as above.

**Slaveownia.**—The word is found in the Kansas correspondence of the New York *Tribune* in 1862, and had a limited local currency at that time. It never came into general use, save in a serio-comic sense, or among illiterate lovers of high-sounding words.

**Slave Power.**—Namely, the slaveholders' power, as it existed during the days of negro slavery.

**Slave States.**—As they existed prior to the Civil War, the Slave States were Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.—See "Wayward Sisters."

**Soap.**—Originally used by the Republican managers during the campaign of 1880 as the

cipher for "money" in their telegraphic despatches. In 1884 it was revived as a derisive war-cry aimed at the Republicans by their opponents.

**Solid South.**—The unbroken political bond of the Southern States; the united white vote (Democratic) as opposed to the solid Republican vote of the negroes. The phrase has been traced back only to the reconstruction period succeeding the Civil War (*circa* 1868). It is alleged, however, that it was in use prior to that time. Its popular modern usage is believed to have originated in the lobbies at Washington, whence it soon found its way into print.

**Sons of Liberty.**—A name assumed by certain secret societies whose purpose was the liberation of Confederate prisoners held at the North during the Civil War. An alleged branch of the Knights of the Golden Circle.

**Soup.**—The phrase, "He's in the soup," in a political sense, meaning that a candidate has been defeated or otherwise come to grief, made its appearance in New York during the presidential campaign of 1888. According to the

*Evening Post* of December 8 of that year, it was started on its public career by a steamboat load of "toughs" who went down the bay to welcome a noted prize-fighter, who was due on an ocean steamer. The undesirable boat-load was not allowed alongside, as they were most of them drunk. In the excitement somebody fell overboard. On being hailed by the steamer to know what was the matter, for it was after night-fall, some one replied sententiously: "Oh, nuthin' much; somebody's in de soup." The phrase was immediately taken up in the papers and became part of the political slang of the day.

**Spellbinder.**—During the presidential campaign of 1888 the corps of public speakers on behalf of the Republicans were in the habit of dropping in at the National Republican headquarters in New York and recounting their oratorical triumphs, with frequent reference to "spellbound" audiences and the like. One of their number, Mr. William Cassius Goodloe, jocularly referred to the company as "spellbinders," and the name took at once. A spellbinder',

club was formed after the election. The name appears in a conspicuous head-line of the *New York Tribune*, November 15, 1888.

**Split Ticket.**—See "Ticket."

**Spoils.**—"To the victor belong the spoils of the enemy," said William L. Marcy, of New York, in the United States Senate, in 1832, and shortly thereafter the suggestion was acted upon. That is, the public offices were filled by representatives of the party in power. The spoils system, then introduced by Democrats, was cheerfully perpetuated by the Republicans when they came into power in 1860, and it may be said generally that it is always in favor with the "Ins," but is as universally disapproved by the "Outs."

**Spread-Eagle.**—The chief heraldic device of the United States, borne upon the great seal, the coat-of-arms, many of the coins, the buttons and decorations of the army and navy, the seals of many of the States, etc. Secondly, the spread-eagle stands for boastfulness, pretentiousness, and the like, as, "a spread-eagle style of oratory;" "he goes in for spread-eagleism,"

etc. It is curious to find spread-eagleism defined in an English book as "the American equivalent of *British* bunkum" (*Farmer's Americanisms, Old and New*, p. 509), the latter being, so far as known, peculiarly American.—See "Buncombe."

**Squatter Sovereignty.**—"Squatters" is the popular name for homesteaders or settlers in a new country where they may acquire proprietary rights after a certain term of residence. In 1846 an attempt was made (see Wilmot Proviso) to prohibit slavery in newly acquired territories, the opponents of the measure holding that settlers in any territory of the United States were "sovereigns," entitled to decide whether they would or would not hold slaves. Of course, the anti-slavery and pro-slavery parties took opposite sides in the matter, but in 1849 California (as a Territory) turned the tables by adopting an anti-slavery constitution, which was precisely what the advocates of squatter sovereignty had believed they would not do. The question was temporarily adjusted by the passage of a number of bills collectively known as the "Compro-



mise of 1850," practically affirming sovereign rights in the Territories.

**Stalwart.**—A Republican who stands by his party, right or wrong. The term acquired its special significance when Roscoe Conkling was the leader of the party (*circa* 1878-9). His followers were denominated "Stalwarts." They supported what was known as the "machine wing" (*q. v.*) of the Republican party.

**Star Routes.**—These are post-office routes which are not self-supporting, and are designated by asterisks in the "Postal Guide." The conditions of operating such routes are obviously favorable to speculation, and the term "Star Route" was connected with highly disreputable official scandals from 1876 to 1884.

**Stars and Bars.**—The flag of the Southern Confederacy, in contradistinction from the "*Stars and Stripes*," the flag of the United States.

**Stars and Stripes.**—The flag of the United States of America, consisting of thirteen stripes of red and white, representing the thirteen original colonies, and a blue "union," bear-

ing white stars corresponding in number with the States, a star being added to the regulation flag whenever a new State is admitted to the Union.

**State Rights.**—The political creed which favors the retention of independent powers by individual States as opposed to “Centralization ” (*q. v.*).

**Still Hunt.**—Originally a sporting term, but applied during the campaign of 1876 to political methods conducted in secret, or under-handed methods.

**Straddle.**—A stock-broker’s term which acquired a political meaning during the campaign of 1884 ; as, “the straddle in the platform,” meaning an attempt to provide for any event in the future or meet the views of people who hold diverse opinions.

**Straight Outs.**—Thorough-going, uncompromising ; as, “straight-out Republicans.”

**Straight Ticket.**—See “Ticket.”

**Strict Constructionists.** (1821–1825).—A wing of the then Republican party that favored a strict construction of the Constitution ; namely,

“State rights.” It subsequently developed into the Democratic party.—See “Loose Constructionists.”

**Strong Government Whigs.**—One of the early divisions of the original Whig party which favored what has since been called “Centralization,” as opposed to State rights, or the “Particularists” (*q. v.*). This wing of the party adopted the more easily handled name of Federalists (*q. v.*) after the formal adoption of a Constitution in 1789.

**Stump.**—“On the stump,” to “make a stump speech,” to “stump the West for Harrison,” or the like, are specimens of every-day speech. The term originated on the frontiers when the country was newly cleared of its forests, and the stump of a tree often afforded the most convenient rostrum for a political speaker. Thus the word came to have a picturesque and apt significance which has long survived the disappearance of actual stumps from localities where they formerly served as platforms, and even as pulpits.

**Swallow Tails.**—During the campaign of

1876 a considerable number of Democrats who moved in fashionable New York circles took an unprecedented interest in political affairs, hoping to effect much-needed reforms. It is said that John Morrissey, a retired prize-fighter and a prominent local politician of the day, becoming incensed at this invasion of his prerogatives, went down-town one morning clad in full evening dress, and with a French dictionary under his arm. He explained his new departure by saying that this sort of thing was necessary in order to retain one's influence. The opposite faction was called the "Short Hairs," in deference either to their "fighting cut" or their supposed recent release from prison.

**Taboo.**—A verb adapted from the Polynesian dialect, meaning to prohibit. It was commonly used in New England to characterize the embargo laws of 1807.

**Tammany.**—An Indian chief of the Delaware tribe, whose name was adopted, shortly after Washington's first inauguration (1789), by a patriotic society, which had numerous "wigwams" in different towns, and canonized St. Tammany as the patron of the young republic. This society soon became political in its character, but at this writing survives only in the New York wigwam, Tammany Hall, which, at this writing (1890), practically controls a majority of the Democratic vote in the city.

**Tattooed Man.**—A caricature was published in *Puck* just before Mr. Blaine's nomination for the presidency in 1884, representing him as indelibly tattooed with words and figures

suggestive of the charges which his enemies brought against him. The nickname was popularly used during the campaign that followed.

**Teetotal.**—See “Total Abstinence.”

**Temperance Party.**—A local name for Republicans in Maine in 1854 ; also, in general, the Prohibition party.

**Third House.**—The Lobby (*q. v.*).

**Three-Twenty-Nine (329).**—During the presidential campaign of 1880 these numbers were chalked by Democrats on every wall and doorstep and fence in the land. Among the campaign charges against Mr. Garfield, the Republican candidate, was one alleging that he had received as a bribe \$329 worth of *Crédit Mobilier* stock.

**Ticket** (from old Fr. *estiquette*, a label).—A list of candidates placed in nomination for office, as the “Democratic ticket,” the “Prohibition ticket,” etc. A “straight ticket” comprises all the regular party nominations. A “split ticket” represents different divisions of a party. A “mixed ticket” combines the nominees of different parties. A “scratch ticket” is one from

which one or more names have been erased. This political use of the word appears never to have been recognized in England until recently. Johnson omits it, and it appears as an Americanism only in the "Imperial" and in the "Encyclopedic" dictionaries. Even Webster has it only in the supplement (edition of 1879), where, however, he cites Sarah Franklin (1766): "The old ticket forever! We have it by thirty-four votes." It would thus appear that its usage in this sense dates back to early colonial times, since Mrs. Bache (*née* Franklin) would not have used the word in this sense had not its meaning been popularly recognized.

**Tippecanoe.**—A river of Northwestern Indiana, on whose banks William Henry Harrison, afterward President of the United States, won a notable victory over the Indians in 1811. Harrison was nicknamed "Tippecanoe" because of this success. "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" was the refrain of a popular song during the Log Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign in 1839 (*q. v.*). The author was A. C. Ross, of Zanesville, O., and the air to which the words were

sung was the old one known as "The Little Pig's Tail."

**Tissue Ballots.**—Ballots printed on thin paper so that a single voter can deposit a number of them at one and the same time without detection. Tissue ballots are believed to have been invented in North Carolina in 1876, to facilitate overpowering the negro vote at local elections.

**Tom the Tinker.**—A *nom de guerre* originating during the Whiskey Rebellion (*q. v.*) of 1791-94. The house of an obnoxious official was pulled to pieces by a mob whose members gave out that they were "mending it." Mending and "tinkering" being interchangeable terms, the members dubbed themselves "tinkers," and "Tom the Tinker" was shortly evolved as the popular watchword of the first rebellion against the United States Government.

**Tom, Tip, and Ty.**—A party motto common in Ohio during the "Hard Cider" campaign of 1840. "Tom" Corwin was running for the governorship of the State, while "Tippe-



canoe" (Harrison) and Tyler were the Whig candidates on the presidential ticket.

**Tory.**—When the Declaration of Independence compelled a definition of the lines between royalists and rebels, Tories naturally remained loyal to the crown, while Whigs generally espoused the patriot cause. After the Revolution the word Tory dropped out of popular usage save as a term of opprobrium.—See "Whig."

## U

**Uncle Sam.**—This nickname for United States appears to have first gained currency during the second war with England (1812-14). The initials U. S. branded upon all kinds of government property caught the eye of some wag, and were translated by him into "Uncle Sam." In Frost's "Naval History of the United States" it is related that one Samuel Wilson, a government inspector of provisions at Troy, N. Y., was the original Uncle Sam, so nicknamed by the workmen about the military stores. The casks were marked "E. A.—U. S.," Elbert Anderson being the contractor's name. The brand U. S. was not so well known as it is now, and the "Uncle Sam" version soon spread beyond the government warehouses. It followed the army, and was carried all over the country by the disbanded volunteers after the return of peace. Uncle Sam is for Americans

what John Bull is for the English, save that he is always pictorially represented in exaggerated and impossible habiliments, such as might be worn on the stage by a burlesque actor, and with a personality to match, while the typical John Bull takes life seriously in sober garb, like a "fine old English gentleman."

**Unionists.**—Southerners who favored the preservation of the Federal Union before and during the war for secession.

**United Americans.**—Same as American party (*q. v.*).

**Upper House.**—The Senate, National or State. First used officially in Massachusetts in 1718. (See Drake's "History of Boston," p. 558.) "Lower House," as applied to the more popular branch of legislature, originated at the same time.

## V

**Vendue.**—(French *vendu*, sold.) A shameless assignment of offices to the highest bidders. In a non-political sense the word was used as early as 1754 in Pennsylvania. (“Mitteberger’s Travels,” p. 22.)

## W

**Wagon Boy.**—The popular nickname of the Hon. Thomas Corwin, of Ohio. In his youth he earned his living as a teamster on a Kentucky farm.

**War-Cries.**—The presidential campaign of 1884 saw the introduction of a species of political war-cry not previously in vogue. It was based on the well-known habit of drill-sergeants in marking time for a squad of recruits, to teach them to march in step. He calls out as the respective feet touch the ground : “ Left—left—left—right—left ! ” the pauses between Nos. 1, 2, and 3 being twice as long as those between 3, 4, and 5. It is believed that the idea of calling out “ Blaine—Blaine—James—G—Blaine ” in this cadenced measure originated in a Republican meeting in New York, where, in a pause between speeches, a party of Columbia College students began stamping in cadence after the manner of

the "gallery gods" during too long an intermission at the play. Some one started the Blaine cry; the idea took instantly, the whole assembly followed suit, and when the meeting was over the crowd formed an impromptu procession and marched in step to its own music. These war-cries proved a conspicuous feature of the campaign. Both parties invented five-footed rhyming sentences, and stanzas, and the *esprit* of great processions everywhere was increased ten-fold by these cadenced sing-song cries, which almost compelled men to march in step, and kept up the excitement as nothing else could have done. They even assumed a threatening character during the days immediately following the election, when the result was still in doubt, and might easily have become war-cries in earnest had the suspense continued a little while longer. During this campaign, too, the peculiar staccato cheer ('rah, 'rah, 'rah '), instead of the old-time and more formal "Hurrah" three times repeated, was for the first time generally used in political ranks. This ringing, spirited method of cheering was introduced at Harvard by the

class of 1866 (A. D. Hodges, Jr., *Nation*, October 2, 1890); and was probably invented there about 1864 to do duty at student gatherings where long-continued cheering became irksome. It was quickly adopted at Yale, and soon spread to the other colleges. Harvard and Yale still retain the simple form, followed by "Yale!" or "Harvard!" as the case may be. Other colleges and societies have resorted to more complicated forms for their distinctive war-cries, and in times of political excitement all sorts of ingenious variations are contrived, bringing in names of candidates, societies, and the like. During the campaign of 1884, too, was introduced the custom, also borrowed from the colleges, of spelling some temporarily significant catch-word in unison, as, for instance, "S-O-A-P!" the separate letters being pronounced in perfect time by several hundred voices at once.

**War Horse.**—A nickname apt to be applied to any energetic political worker. It is used derisively as well as in an honorable sense. The combinations in which this occurs are too nu-

merous for specification, but one may be cited as peculiarly picturesque: "The War Horse of the Shawangunk" (pronounced "Shongum," a range of mountains in Northern New Jersey).

**Washingtonians.**—Under this name early advocates of a Temperance or Prohibition party organized, about 1840.

**Wayward Sisters, The.**—When the secession of the slave States was impending, in 1861, many leading men felt that they had better be allowed to go rather than plunge the country into civil war. Among these was Gen. Winfield Scott, whose loyalty was unquestioned. In a letter to William H. Seward, he wrote: "Say to the seceded States, Wayward sisters, depart in peace!" The aptness of the phrase struck the popular fancy, and the Confederate States were thenceforward often referred to as "the wayward sisters."

**Whigs.**—The colonial period of American history knew two parties—Whigs and Tories—and these in their pre-revolutionary form are hardly entitled to recognition in strictly na-



tional politics. They were merely importations, and men belonged to one party or the other, according to the predilections of their forefathers in the mother-land. When, however, the disturbing questions arose which led to the Revolution, party lines became marked for local causes, the Whigs, as a general thing, declaring for independence, while the Tories remained loyal to the crown, or, at most, favored passive resistance. After independence was achieved, "Tory" ceased to be recognized as a party name, and was popularly used only as a term of opprobrium. The Whigs survived, but shortly divided on the then new "State's rights" question into "Particularists" and "Strong Government Whigs," and "strict," "loose," and "broad constructionists," and the like. The first were, to adopt modern phraseology, "State-rights men," while the others favored centralization. These last subsequently adopted the less awkward title of Federalists (*q. v.*), and the Whig name temporarily disappeared, to be revived in 1820. It at once commanded a considerable following, but was not strong enough to achieve success

until 1848, when it elected Gen. Zachary Taylor to the presidency, defeating the Democrats for the first time in nearly half a century. Its last appearance on the political battle-field was in the campaign of 1852, but there are still living old Whigs who fondly cherish the memory of what was once a "grand old party." Whigism, Whigery, etc., are terms whose meaning is evident.

**Whip, or Whipper-in.**—An English sporting term adopted into the political vocabulary of both countries. The duty of the "whip" is to see that the members of the party attend to their duty as voters or legislators.

**Whip-Sawing.**—The acceptance of fees or bribes from two opposing persons or parties. It is believed to have originated in the New York State Assembly, and is evidently derived from the whip-saw of mechanics, which cuts both ways.

**Whiskey Rebellion.**—In 1791 Congress passed stringent excise laws, which were forcibly resisted in Pennsylvania, where there were many small whiskey stills. Under the *nom de*

*guerre* of "Tom the Tinker" (*q. v.*), the insurrection grew in strength until, in 1794, troops were called out by the general government, and the laws were enforced.

**Whiskey Ring.**—An association of whiskey dealers who, through the connivance of Government officials, were enabled to evade the revenue laws and amass large fortunes. The ring had its headquarters in St. Louis, and was temporarily broken up in 1875.

**White House, The.**—The official residence of the President, at Washington. Its proper title is the "Executive Mansion," the President's offices and reception rooms being in one wing of the building. This should not be confounded with the "White House" on the Pamunky River, in Virginia, often mentioned in histories of the Civil War. The latter, but for the fact that it stood in the track of armies, would have had only a local significance.

**White League.**—A semi-military organization formed in New Orleans in 1874, nominally through anticipated violence on the part of the negroes. It attempted to import arms from

the North, and riots ensued, many negroes and some whites being killed. Subsequently, the White League became a controlling power in Louisiana politics.

**White Trash.**—Otherwise “poor white trash,” or simply the “poor whites” of the slave-holding States. It is believed that the contemptuous addition of “trash” is due to the negroes, who looked with disdain upon any non-slaveholding white man.

**Wicked Partners.**—During the presidential campaign of 1872, the New York *Sun* invented the term “wicked partners” as defining an alliance between two prominent politicians. The term was so apt that it at once took rank among Americanisms, especially in political relations. “It must be a case of ‘wicked partner,’” is a common form of expression, meaning either that one has been betrayed by an associate, or that one would like such to be the natural inference.

**Wide-Awakes.**—During the first Lincoln campaign (1860) torch-light processions were as popular as they are now. One of these was or-

dered by the Republicans of Hartford, Conn., and some of the participants, clerks in a large dry-goods establishment (Talcott & Post), provided themselves with capes and caps of glazed cloth to protect their clothing from the torch-drippings. The marshal of the occasion, Col. George P. Bissel, afterward of the 25th Connecticut Infantry, having an eye for uniformity, collected these men and placed them at the head of the line, where they attracted much notice. The idea was at once taken up by "Wide-awake" Republicans, and the name was formally adopted at a meeting held March 7. All the local clubs were uniformed, other towns and States followed suit, and in a surprisingly short time the young men of the North were mustered in the Wide-awake ranks. The organization and drill was semi-military, and many a soldier who subsequently fought in the Union cause thus received his first training. The Democrats caught up the idea, and organized clubs called "Little Giants" (*q. v.*) on a similar plan, in honor of their candidate, Stephen A. Douglas. These also served as training-schools for Northern sol-

diers. The name Wide-awake was as early as 1853 applied to the Know-nothings (*q. v.*), and the light-colored soft felt hats which they were supposed to wear were termed "wide-awake hats."

**Wigwam.**—Primarily an Indian word meaning a cabin or hut. The Tammany Society of Philadelphia called its place of meeting a wigwam as early as 1789, and during the Harrison campaign (see "Log Cabin," etc.) log cabins were used as campaign meeting-places under the same name. As early as 1859-60 huge buildings of rough boards were erected for political meetings in large towns, and the practice has been kept up ever since. These, too, are known as wigwams.

**Wheel.**—See "Agricultural Wheel."

**White League.**—An organization formed at the South in 1874 to check the growth of political power among the negroes.

**Whitewash.**—An expression popularly used to indicate a covering up of discreditable matters, as "a whitewashing report," "Mr. Blank's character has been whitewashed by his friends," etc., etc.

**Wilmot Proviso.**—A measure introduced into Congress by David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, in 1846, absolutely excluding slavery from the new territories then about to be acquired from Mexico. The measure was debated at great length, and finally suffered defeat, but the agitation led to the formation first of the “Free-soil,” and subsequently of the Republican, parties.

**Wire-Puller.**—The unsuspected political manager who causes events to take place as does the operator of a Marionette show, himself being invisible, and the machinery concealed. Mr. Lowell uses the term in his epigram, “The Boss” :

“ Skilled to pull wires, he baffles Nature’s hope,  
Who sure intended him to stretch a rope.”

## X

**X. Y. Z. Mission.** — A commission appointed by President John Adams in 1797 to negotiate an amicable arrangement of difficulties resulting from arbitrary acts on the part of the French Directory, in violation of international courtesy. The three commissioners, C. C. Pinckney, John Marshall, and Elbridge Gerry, after vainly endeavoring for several months to obtain an amicable settlement, were peremptorily ordered to quit France. In 1798 the Senate published the correspondence, the identity of the French agents being concealed under the initials X. Y. Z. They had demanded bribes and loans for the French Republic, and the whole affair was so discreditable to France that England caused the correspondence to be published all over the Continent. A brief naval war resulted between the United States and France before the matter was finally adjusted. The three French agents were MM. Hottinguer (X), Bellamy (Y), and Hauteval (Z).



**Yankee, Yankee Doodle, etc.**—Within the United States the name Yankee is understood to mean only natives or residents of the New England States. The rest of the world applies it to Americans in general. The term “Yankee” or “Yengee” was the native Indian corruption of “English,” it being apparently impossible for them to sound the initial *e* or the final *sh*. This, upon the whole, seems to be the most reasonable explanation, though the lexicographers have invented numerous ingenious theories, ascribing to the word Persian, Gaelic, or Chinese origin, according to their various specialties. The English settlers in New England were first dubbed Yankees by their Dutch neighbors along the Hudson in New York—hence its circumscribed application within the United States. It was adopted by British soldiers during the war for Indepen-

dence, and used contemptuously, of course, by them, but for that very reason was gloried in by the Americans.

The most credible story of the origin of the song recites that in 1775 Abercrombie's army was encamped near Albany, N. Y., preparing to advance on Ticonderoga. Levies of volunteers and militia "Yankees" had been called for from the New England States, and the companies that responded presented such a motley appearance that an English army surgeon, Shomburg by name, wrote the words of "Yankee Doodle," set them to music, and gravely dedicated them to the new recruits. The suffix "Doodle" is an old English term of derision. A royalist song calls Cromwell "Nankey Doodle," and the change of *n* to *y* would naturally suggest itself when the word Yankee was in common use. The song at once gained popularity, and was patriotically roared about American camp-fires after the first shots for independence had been fired at Lexington and Concord. The air of "Yankee Doodle" is said by Mr. Buckingham Smith to be that of an ancient sword-dance of the Biscayans,

and it has also been recognized as among the popular airs of Hungary and of the Netherlands. It was known and sung in England and in New England long before its army popularity, under the name of "Lucy Locket," a nursery rhyme dating back certainly as far as the "Beggars' Opera" (1727). As the first martial air of the Republic, it early won, and has ever since maintained, its national popularity. The regimental bands of both armies played it during the Civil War, and numberless political campaign songs have been set to its lively measure.

**Yazoo Fraud** (1795-1814).—A fraudulent claim of certain land companies, under authority of the State of Georgia, to a large tract of territory along the Yazoo River. The legislature of Georgia was shamelessly bribed by speculators, and the matter was eventually carried to the Supreme Court for settlement, after having occupied the attention of Congress during several sessions.

**Young Hickory.**—Martin Van Buren, President from 1837 to 1841, was so called because the political mantle of "Old Hickory" (Jack-

son) was said to have fallen upon his shoulders. He was also called "Little Van" and "the Little Magician," in allusion to his physical stature; "the Northern Man with Southern Principles," by the more bitter of his political opponents; and "the Dutchman," by those who affected hostility to the Knickerbocker or Dutch element in New York politics. (See "Dutch.")

























